Plain Reasons FOR BEING A CATHOLIC

REV. ALBERT POWER S.J.

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WITHDRAWN

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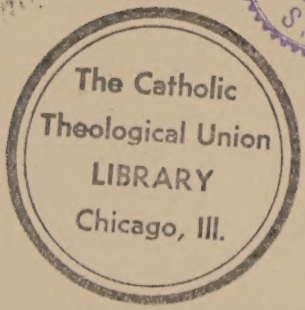

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PREFACE

The fact cannot be too often or too strongly insisted upon that Catholicism is a system based on Reason — a system which if sympathetically examined and fairly judged will inevitably appeal to all that is best and noblest and sanest in human nature.

The simplest proof of this statement is the fact — patent to all — that it *has* so appealed to the greatest and brightest intellects of our race; since the Roll of Honour of the Catholic Church includes the names of men and women that have been the world's most illustrious ornaments in every department of human knowledge and human activity.

The object of this Volume is to set forth in popular style and simple language some aspects of this appeal to reason which Catholicism makes. Its basis is the principle that if outsiders would lay aside prejudice and learn what the Catholic Church is, not from her enemies but from those who know her intimately and at first hand — which is surely the rational method of studying any institution — their views will in many cases undergo a radical

change, and if they do not become Catholics themselves, they will at least regard as reasonable the conduct of those who do; and they will certainly not join the ranks of those blind, infatuated enemies of the Catholic Church who, turning a deaf ear to all argument, think that nothing too bad can be said against her.

The plan followed is this: Chapter one deals in general with the intellectual foundations of Catholicism, adopting the principle that Reason is the guide of life and that all things — religion included — must be judged at the bar of Reason. Catholicism has never shrunk from fair criticism; it scrutinizes and strives to answer every difficulty, and insists upon honest intellectual conviction as the groundwork of its whole spiritual structure.

The second Chapter applies this principle more in detail to the Catholic act of faith and to the practical means supplied by the Church to help her subjects individually. Incidentally the question of the Protestant appeal to the Bible is touched upon, and in Chapter three this subject is more fully discussed and the Catholic doctrine of Biblical inspiration explained.

The real danger, however, of modern times is not Protestantism but infidelity — and Chapter four deals with the hostility between Catholicism

and Free Thought, discussing the question: " Does Catholicism enslave the intellect? " It deals with the charges of superstition, fanaticism and undue insistence upon authority, often brought against the Church.

Chapter five argues the truth of the Catholic Church from the strenuous way she defends the Moral Law, and the practical means she adopts to enforce its observance. Chapter six discusses her authoritative attitude in the matter of teaching revealed Truth.

Finally Chapter seven judges the merits of the Catholic system by the effects it has produced in the world and the influence it exercises in promoting along right lines the advancement of human knowledge.

Hence the first two Chapters examine the intellectual basis on which Catholicism rests; the last five show that Catholicism is the only institution in the world that has been faithful and successful in defending the Bible, resisting infidelity, safeguarding the Moral Law, teaching revealed Truth with authority, and helping on the true progress, both intellectual and moral, of mankind.

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Catholicism, which rests on a sound intellectual basis tested by nineteen centuries of criticism from the world's keenest minds, has been accepted by the vast majority of educated thinking people as the only true religion, and, if still rejected by many, this is due chiefly to extrinsic causes, which do not prejudice its truth. The philosophic basis of Catholicism may be summed up in certain propositions admitting of definite proofs that will bear the closest possible scrutiny.

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PLAIN REASONS FOR BEING A CATHOLIC

Chapter One

CATHOLICISM FOUNDED ON REASON

A few years ago the world was startled by the conversion to Catholicism of one of the most striking, popular, and vigorous writers of the day in England, Gilbert K. Chesterton. He has been for many years a very prominent figure in the world of letters, both as a journalist and a writer of sparkling and fascinating books.

To his readers it was obvious that this stalwart Protestant and intensely patriotic Englishman had feelings towards the Catholic Church very different from those of the ordinary Englishman who is a Protestant. Gilbert Chesterton was interested, was sympathetic, was inclined to see the good points about Catholicism. He expounded with wonderful precision her principles and doctrines, and, strange to say, as a Protestant, produced a book which has been declared by some to be one of the best defences of Catholicism which has yet appeared in English — his book called "Orthodoxy."

Well, in 1922 Mr. Chesterton submitted to the Catholic Church and was received into her fold.

And the non-Catholic world demanded *why?* This sturdy reasoner, this cultured man of the world, who knows life and human nature so well, this modern Falstaff, whose wit is almost as keen and riotous as that of his Shakespearean prototype, has actually joined the Roman Communion. What can his reason be? Has he discovered that Roman Catholicism is founded on solid arguments? That these arguments can so appeal to a thinking, hard-headed, sober man of the world, as to convince him that Catholicism is the truth? And consequently that Protestantism, the petted, belauded, beloved Protestantism, which millions of men have revelled in and gloated over for four centuries past, is all wrong, that it has no strength as a religious system, no vital, living energy to battle against the corroding, destructive agencies of infidelity, paganism and immorality, which ceaselessly attack and undermine man's belief in the supernatural as the waves of the ocean eat into and encroach upon the land?

We have mentioned Gilbert K. Chesterton; he is but one of an endless line of thinking, sober-minded men who, in like manner, having studied and explored the claims of the Catholic Church, have submitted to her authority.

Reason the Guide of Life. — Reason is the guide of life. Reason is to life what the compass and the

chart are to the mariner launching forth on an ocean voyage. Before the compass was invented, men hardly dared to go out of sight of land: a voyage across the ocean was impossible. The compass came, and all was changed. Intellect is the compass of life. Everything we come in contact with must be tested by reason. Our life is the outcome of our thoughts, and thought is the product of reason, or intellect exercising its activity on the things it meets.

Are you a merchant interested in commerce, and anxious to get good value for your money? If so you must be alert — you must exercise actively your faculty of reasoning.

Are you a student of art, and would distinguish the false from the true, the genuine from the imitation or forgery in sculpture, painting, music, or literature? How will you succeed? Again, by skilful and trained use of your intellect.

Reason, therefore, is the weapon with which man is armed to hew his way through life. Reason makes him lord of creation; all things are subject to him through this conquering faculty. Heaven and earth gradually yield up their secrets; laws are enunciated, qualities are explored, named, and catalogued, forces are harnessed and directed in obedience to the guidance of this imperious sovereign, Reason.

When a new system of thought — a new theory in science — such, *e.g.*, as Einstein's theory of Relativity, is presented to us, we immediately submit it to the scrutiny of reason. All things are arraigned at the bar of this sovereign judge; and any system or theory or statement that will not stand the test of reason must go; there is no court of appeal against its decision.

And so religion, too, must be tested by the light of reason; and any doctrine or system that offends against reason — that is repugnant to reason — cannot be accepted or maintained or defended by reasonable men.

A World of Mysteries. — In saying this we do not mean to assert that mysteries are excluded from our belief, or that we accept nothing as true of which we cannot give a full and satisfactory explanation. The physical world is full of mysteries — *i.e.*, facts whose existence we admit, but the explanation of which we cannot give; such, for example, as Gravity, which no man can explain; the Ether, with its seemingly contradictory and wholly inexplicable qualities; Life, which so eludes adequate definition, and so on.

But what we do assert is that we shall admit no mysteries as true unless our reason gives us adequate grounds for accepting them; though, on the other hand, if reason supplies such grounds, then

to deny the mystery, simply because it is a mystery, is to stultify oneself, is to dethrone reason, is to refuse to follow its guidance; is, in fact, unreasonable.

Let us, then, ask the question frankly and boldly: Is Catholicism reasonable? Is it a religion that can face the white searchlight of truth and come safely through the ordeal? And we answer: Catholicism is the only religion in the world that can stand the test of close, intellectual scrutiny, and not crumble away in the process. Hence we assert: Catholicism is the only intellectual religion in the world, is the only religion which an honest, clear-headed thinker, one who is willing to face facts and not shrink from conclusions, can wholeheartedly and unreservedly accept as the true religion.

I say that Catholicism can stand the test of intellectual criticism. The first obvious proof is this: Catholicism *has* stood the test — she has faced the fiery ordeal of critical investigation century after century for nigh two thousand years and still stands unscathed. The Catholic Church has withstood the fierce intellectual onslaughts of some of the keenest minds the world has known, from the days of the sneering Celsus and the mocking Lucian of Samosta, down to the days of Voltaire and Rousseau and the Encyclopædists;

later still, she has listened unmoved to the polished satire of Renan, the philosophic diatribes of John Stuart Mill, and the declamations of the hosts of modern infidels. These men and a thousand others deliberately set to work to destroy Catholicism with intellectual weapons; and what is the result? Why, that Catholicism is as fresh and strong in men's souls to-day as ever it was. Protestantism in its thousand shapes is dead or dying. Their house was not built on a rock; it stood on the earth without a foundation, and so it could not resist the rising tide of rationalism and infidelity.

How is it with the Catholic Church? — In 1799, when men nailed up the coffin of Pius VI, they whispered one to another: "This is the last Pope; Catholicism is dead. The French Revolution, bringing with it a new era of reason and light to mankind, has killed the old superstition." So they said mockingly!

It reminds one of certain Jewish rulers standing at another tomb. They had buried Jesus, and all was over with Him. But when people came searching for the body on Easter Sunday, angels asked this question: "Why seek you the living with the dead? He is not here, but is risen." As with Christ, so with His Church.

After the buffetings of nineteen centuries, the Catholic Church stands, not decrepit, worn out,

emaciated, or shrunken; but erect, full of life, all eagerness to go forth to new conquests.

Moreover, this religious system is embraced by every class and degree of men; not only by the simple, the lowly, the ignorant, but by the most enlightened and cultured men in the world's history; by men eminent in every branch of literature, art, and science; men whose names are household words for truth, honesty, and acuteness of mind. Therefore, we may conclude at once, Catholicism must rest on a solid, intellectual basis.

Millions of enlightened men will not be fooled age after age into accepting as true something that is only a lie and a deceit. The more startling the claims and the teaching of Catholicism, the more solid and convincing and overwhelming must be the grounds on which those claims are based.

If she reaches out her hand so authoritatively and dictates so clearly to men of all ages and climes how to regulate not only their exterior conduct, but also their interior life, their secret thoughts and wishes and aspirations; if she tells them so definitely not only what to do and how to act, but also what to believe, how to think, and how to pray, and if that authoritative voice of hers is so willingly listened to and obeyed without any compulsion by millions of thinking, reasoning, sober-minded men and women, and that, in the broad daylight of

twentieth century civilization and culture, then there must be a very deep foundation of solid reasoning to explain the phenomenon.

An Objection. — Here someone may object: But what about the multitudes of educated, thinking, and sincere men who reject Catholicism? Will not their attitude of hostility and rejection be just as powerful an argument against Catholicism as the adhesion of multitudes of others is an argument in its favor?

This objection is one which often weighs with outsiders, to prevent their joining the Catholic Church.

Answer. — In answer to the objection, I offer the following suggestions: — In the first place, many of those who reject or denounce Catholicism, have never studied the arguments in its favor. They have been accustomed from childhood to hear Catholics and the Catholic Church reviled and abused, and they think it hardly worth while examining her claims.

Most converts can bear witness to this fact — can tell of the extraordinary ignorance and blindness in which outsiders live with respect to the true inwardness of the Catholic Faith.

Hence, in the case of the vast majority of non-Catholics, especially in the English-speaking world, you can as little cite their refusal to accept Ca-

tholicism as an argument against the truth of the Church as you can cite the fact that the population of China or the peoples of Africa are not Catholics as an argument against Catholicism being the true religion. These people have never rejected Catholicism because they were never brought into real contact with it.

Prejudice. — Besides ignorance, we have also to consider the influence of prejudice.

In some subjects — as, *e.g.*, in mathematics — the arguments require on the part of the student nothing more than mental attention or concentration to secure assent.

But where the subject is one of wider appeal, other qualities besides mental attention come into play. Such an argument may call for sympathy, willingness to see the facts, an unbiased disposition, to enable it to be grasped and appreciated.

Then too we have, in the case of Catholicism, to consider the difficulty that often arises from the practical consequences of assent to its truth — the difficulty of shaping one's life to suit one's belief. To become a Catholic may mean facing poverty, even destitution, as well as desertion by friends, and the contempt of the world. Not everyone is heroic enough to face these, and the danger looming in the distance will imperceptibly sway the intellect and render it less sensitive to the force of the

Catholic argument. Hence you see that ignorance, prejudice, and unwillingness to face suffering are often responsible for people rejecting Catholicism.

Another Principle. — But now I want you to consider another important principle, and that is that where there is a question of proving the truth of facts (and Catholicism deals with concrete facts), *one* positive witness who, by personal experience or other reliable means, knows and testifies to the truth may outweigh a hundred or a thousand negative witnesses who deny or doubt the facts simply because they do not know the evidence, and are unwilling to accept the facts from some extrinsic or intrinsic reason.

Suppose a case of trial for murder. Two or three witnesses saw the deed done, and testify positively to the facts. Their evidence will outweigh the opinions or views of hundreds of others who, out of sympathy or pity for the accused person, are unwilling to believe him guilty, and are forming their judgments without allowing the positive evidence to influence them.

So in the case of the Resurrection of Christ. A certain number of witnesses testified to the fact of Christ's appearing to them in His risen shape, as a man come back from the tomb alive and well — the Man whom shortly before they had seen murdered on the Cross. This statement — that

the dead man had come to life again — seemed quite incredible. It was against all the experience of mankind hitherto. Pagans who heard the story mocked at it, cried out upon the absurdity of such a tale; one of the inner circle of Apostles, when he was told by his fellow-Apostles that they had seen the risen Master, actually scoffed at the idea. "Unless I can handle the wound marks in His hands and feet and side, I will not believe," cried Thomas. And yet the positive evidence of the few who saw Jesus has outweighed with hundreds of millions of people the inherent difficulties of the Resurrection story, as well as its scornful rejection by the civilized Roman world; and we see to-day the phenomenon of a large section of the world's population accepting as simple historical fact the Resurrection of Christ from the dead.

But that is only a part and a consequence of the acceptance by the best and most enlightened part of mankind of the central doctrine of Christianity — *viz.*, the Divinity of Christ.

Belief in the Divinity of Christ. — Try to realize what this means: A certain man is sentenced to death by the governor of a Roman province, and has actually to submit to the extreme penalty of the law. You know the odium and disgrace that attaches to a public execution. The shadow of the gibbet sends a chill into every heart. Now, of

all forms of public execution that the world has known, the worst, the most painful, the most infamous, was crucifixion. With the Romans, the cross was a by-word for all that was most horrible. A vile form of imprecation was to wish a man sent to the cross — it was like wishing him sent to hell. Words cannot exaggerate the awful disgrace that crucifixion involved. Now, this Man, Jesus of Nazareth, died on a cross in company with two others who had been tried and condemned to death as highway robbers. Death was, it seemed, too strong for Him.

What a fool Christ must have seemed to the world on that day when He was gasping for breath in the agony of crucifixion. The man who had cured the sick and raised the dead, and had helped others so lavishly, cannot now raise a finger to help Himself. So they jeered on Mt. Calvary: "Ha! You called yourself the Son of God, you claimed to be God's darling, who could calm the waves and still the storm; now let us see what you can do for yourself. Come down from the cross, and we will believe you. Escape from death if you can." And seemingly He could not. He died.

The whole great city of Jerusalem was shaking with laughter at this fool that had at last met with his deserts. Caiphas, the high-priest, and his friends rubbed their hands and shouted with de-

light because they had at last got rid of Jesus of Nazareth.

Conquers the World. — And behold! Look round the world to-day! The civilized, religious world is bent in adoration before the figure of that crucified Man whom the Jews labelled a fool, and recognizes in Him a Divine Person.

The Apostles a few weeks later stood in the streets of that same city and told the Jews they had crucified the Author of life. It seemed absurd and incredible; yet they have persuaded a large section of mankind of the truth of that seemingly impossible statement!

Now, I stop and ask: Do you think that this extraordinary result has come about without any solid reason to support the claim? Are men really such fools? I mean educated men, thinking men, sincere, pure-minded men and women, are they such fools as to accept such a doctrine as this of the Divinity of Christ, if it were not built on a solid foundation, if it were merely the dream of a few deluded fanatics?

Fancy religions start up periodically, gather a few disciples, and then flicker and die out. But belief in Christ's Divinity has been tested in the crucible of the world's thought for nineteen hundred years, and yet is just as deeply rooted in the human heart to-day as it was in the heart of

Peter when he first proclaimed it in the market-place of Jerusalem, or in that of Saul of Tarsus as he preached it in the bazaars of Damascus.

I have said thus much to show how the positive evidence of a few people often outweighs the incredulity of a great many. In the case of Catholicism, as in the case of other positive things, it requires effort and good will to examine, to weigh, to assent; whereas, to deny, to reject is very easy. A fool can propose in a short time more questions than a wise man can answer in many days or weeks, or even years.

Easy to Criticize. — Criticism is one of the easiest forms of intellectual amusement. Any fool can throw a stone or use a hammer to smash to pieces a stained-glass window or a priceless statue, which perhaps only Michelangelo could restore. It is easy to destroy; hard to build up.

Moreover, the destructive propensity is far commoner and more easily developed than the constructive. Hence, no wonder if many minds, even clever, thinking, reasoning minds, attack and reject Catholicism.

To set up a definite positive system of any kind in this sceptical world of ours is to attract at once criticism and denunciation. But if your system is one which not only lays down positive doctrine and teaches definite truths, but also claims to impose

obligations and to interfere with a man's liberty, then the storm of protest and opposition will wax very loud indeed.

Catholicism Constructive. — Jesus Christ is the greatest constructive thinker the world has ever known. He set Himself to build a house (as He Himself describes it), a spiritual building that would be world-wide in its span, capable of sheltering the whole human race, and He claimed the homage and service of every individual on earth, wishing to make them all spiritual stones in this great new building. Hence, the wonder is not that many clever and acute-minded men reject, attack, denounce Christ's doctrine and His Church. The miracle would be were it not so.

And yet this storm of opposition, even from the educated, the cultured, the well-to-do classes, may really count for very little against the truth of the system. Did it matter much, think you, to Saul of Tarsus, as he walked down the streets of Athens, that the philosophers and professors of that great seat of learning derided his doctrine of a crucified God as folly and midsummer madness? I mean, did it shake his faith or alter his conviction? When he entered that great city, once the light and leader of the world in culture, and still the chief university city of the Roman Empire, there was, perhaps, not a single Christian there. But Paul knew his secret;

he summoned the Athenians to listen to his teaching; he disclosed his message, and, behold! the message that echoed in the Areopagus on that summer's day nineteen hundred years ago has crept down the centuries, has swept across the oceans, and we are listening to the same wonderful message, and are thankful that we have actually caught the accents of Paul's teaching, and have accepted his statement as true, that the crucified Man is God Himself.

Positive Believers. — The fact that critics carp, and professors object, and infidels sneer affects not one whit our argument from the number and quality of positive believers who accept Catholic teaching. One positive believer like the great Pasteur, the Prince of biologists, or Röntgen, or John Henry Newman, or Frederic Ozanam, has more weight than ten thousand rationalistic scoffers whose whole activity consists in destructive criticism.

Catholicism is constructive; infidelity destructive. The business of the rationalist is to undermine faith if he can, and leave nothing in its place. He sets forth the riddles or problems of life, which are as old as the world itself, and tries to demonstrate that there is no solution for them.

The function of Catholicism is to deal with these problems and furnish an answer to them, such answer as can be given in this twilight world of ours

— the answer, namely, given by Jesus Christ: ever insisting on that great central truth which is really the key to the riddle of the universe, *viz.*, the priceless value of the human soul, as destined to an immortal existence in the enjoyment of God.

The soul is the jewel for whose sake God has made all the rest of the universe. The darkness of paganism was so deep and impenetrable because men had lost the light of this truth. The function of Catholicism is to keep the knowledge of that truth ever fresh in men's minds.

Philosophic Basis. — We have hitherto discussed in general the question of the reasonableness of Catholicism, and have tried to show that it is a system which must rest on good, solid reasons, since it appeals to the reasonable, educated man, and has been tested now by nearly two thousand years' experience as a practical, working religion.

But if you ask more in detail as to the intellectual grounds on which Catholicism rests, the matter may be presented in various ways. There is, first of all, the philosophic basis, consisting of the triple truth on which all religion rests — the existence of God, the immortality of the soul, the freedom of the will.

To prove these truths is the province of philosophy. If you admit God's existence, the immortality of the soul, and man's free will, then at once the

question arises of man's relationship to God and of His to us, and we ask: Do you admit revelation? Do you admit that God has spoken and told us about our duties to Him? And, if so, where is that revelation to be found?

Let me say a few words about revelation, its necessity and its possibility.

(1) *Revelation.* — If there is to be any true knowledge of God in the world, it must come from Himself. In order that we human beings may know one another, some sort of self-revelation is necessary. The interior world of the soul of each of us is utterly inaccessible, unless we ourselves choose to unlock the door and allow others to know our secret thoughts! The castle of your soul is strongly fortified, and you alone are its master; you alone have the key, and none can enter except at your bidding.

(2) *Possibility of Divine Revelation.* — But then we can, and do, convey our thoughts and ideas to one another through various external mediums. What we call our " life " consists largely in that constant process of self-revelation or externalization which results in conversation, literature, art, music, architecture, drama, and all other means whereby man uses material things to body forth the creations of the soul. Michelangelo gives an astonished world a revelation of his mind in the

marble Moses or the frescoes of the Sistine Chapel; Beethoven reveals himself in his sonatas and Masses; Shakespeare in Macbeth, Hamlet, and Othello.

In every case the spiritual essence bodies itself forth in a material medium, seizes on matter, fills it with the fire of its own thought, and so renders it capable of kindling the flame of thought in other souls that come in contact with it.

Now, if the mind of an artist, poet, musician, architect, or orator can give a revelation of itself to other souls, why may not God, the Supreme Master Mind, also reveal Himself? Why may not He also use created things to convey His thoughts to us?

To deny this, to deny the possibility of divine revelation, to assert that God cannot use created things to convey to us definite information about Himself, is surely entirely and utterly unreasonable. And therefore the position of those who maintain that God can, if He chooses, give us a revelation about Himself, about the universe, about man's destiny, is the only reasonable position, the only position founded on a solid intellectual basis.

It is sometimes asserted that man is too insignificant for God to interest Himself about him. Materially considered, a man is indeed a tiny mote of

dust in the dance of creation. But, spiritually considered, it is far otherwise.

Blaise Pascal says: "Man, materially considered, is absorbed and swallowed up in the immensity of the material universe, but as a thinking being man is not contained in, but himself contains, the universe, since he can think about it." If God took trouble to plan and produce our being, it surely cannot be beneath Him to care for it, and nourish it with truth.

Has God Spoken? — Now, granted the necessity and the possibility of a divine revelation, we ask: But has God actually spoken? We all admit that God reveals Himself in a general way in the universe around us, as the artist reveals himself in the work of his hands. But the question here is: Has God spoken explicitly to convey to man definite truths about Himself, so that we can say that we know such things to be true because God has told them to us? And if He has, how, and when, and to whom? And are those communications now available to us?

Catholic Answer. — That God has actually spoken, that the world is in possession of a body of truths that have been revealed by the Divine Mind and rest on Divine authority, that this body of truth is just as accessible as the truths which constitute the science of astronomy or chemistry or

geology, and that this body of divinely revealed truth is in the keeping of certain people, whose minds are the storehouses of this revelation (just as the minds of scientists and scholars are the living storehouses of history, mathematics, and all other branches of learning) — that is Catholicism.

Five Propositions. — The Catholic position may be summed up in the following five propositions: —

(1) God has actually spoken to the world and communicated doctrines to be accepted and believed on His authority.

(2) He has done so by enlightening the minds of certain individuals and teaching them truths which they were commissioned to publish to others either orally or in writing.

(3) In particular, He has Himself assumed a human soul — a human mind — has appeared as a man on the stage of history, and, through His human mind and human powers of speech, has taught us about His own divine attributes, wishes, and plans.

(4) The truths thus communicated have been transmitted from age to age, and have been safeguarded from loss or injury in transmission by God's watchful care and providence.

(5) The organization provided for the purpose of thus safeguarding and transmitting the divine message is the Catholic Church.

These successive statements need both exposition and proof, and the exposition and proof of them constitutes the science of theology, which science is occupying and exercising the minds of the Church's teachers. These statements are being constantly dealt with and proved in sermons, catechetical instructions, and other forms of teaching of the Church.

My intention here is simply to indicate the general lines on which the argument runs.

Particular Arguments. — The particular aspect which requires to be dwelt upon when dealing with an enquirer who is outside the Church will depend on the point of view of that enquirer.

If he is an agnostic, who doubts the fundamental principles of Catholic philosophy, then one must present him with the philosophic proofs of God's existence, the soul's immortality, and so on.

If the enquirer admits God's existence, and the ordinary conclusions of natural theology, but is in doubt about the Divinity of Christ, about the existence of Divine Revelation, or of a Church founded by Christ, then one must present the arguments for these different theological truths.

In practice, for many people the main question is this: What reasons are there for asserting that the Catholic Church, as we know her to-day, is the

Church founded by Christ? That she is the very organization which Christ initiated as the means of transmitting and preserving intact His own teachings?

Where is Christ's Church? — That is, many admit readily enough the pre-eminence of Jesus of Nazareth as a Divine Teacher — or even His divinity; they also admit the clear evidence of Scripture that He committed His teaching to a body of men who were to constitute an association or organization which He Himself would ever assist in a special way. "Behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world." But they do not see the arguments which prove that the Catholic Church as it exists in this present twentieth century in all the countries of the world in a highly organized state, is actually the same body, with the same authority and the same commission to teach, as the group of disciples that stood on Mt. Olivet on Ascension Day and received Christ's parting blessing.

Now, what do we mean exactly by saying the Catholic Church of to-day is the Church as founded by Christ? Or, more in general: By what principle is the identity of a corporate body preserved intact from age to age?

Suppose someone makes the statement: "I am a member of the religious Order founded by Igna-

tius of Loyola over three centuries ago," what does he mean?

The statement does not mean that the men who now constitute the Order are the same men who formed it in 1540, since we know that the whole personnel of the Order, as of all other institutions, must inevitably change as time rolls on. We have no Rip van Winkles, whose memory can reach back to those old days of good Queen Bess.

Each one of us has experience of the continuance of our personal identity in spite of material changes. The whole human body (so science tells us) undergoes a complete change in a certain number of years; so that you have not now a single particle in your body identical with the particles that constituted your fleshly frame fifteen or twenty years ago. And yet you are the same individual. The body changes, the soul remains; your real self is there all the time.

Identity of a Corporate Body. — But we are talking now of a corporate body — an association or union of men which goes on existing from generation to generation, carrying on its individuality as a moral entity in spite of constant changes in its membership.

What is it that preserves the identity of such a corporate body — *e.g.*, of a religious Order?

There are three things which I think most people

will agree are necessary to secure such identity or moral continuity:

(1) The members must be duly and legally received into the body in the way prescribed by its laws and constitutions.

(2) The end pursued by the association must remain that for which it was instituted.

(3) The means by which it prosecutes that end must also be those contemplated and prescribed by its founder, and embodied in its constitutions.

That these conditions are required I think is clear. A moral body or association grows in a certain definite way; to become a member or associate you must be received, elected, co-opted, according to certain prescribed rules. And by this gradual and legal absorption of new members the identity of the body is maintained.

Again, the members must continue to pursue the end for which the association was founded. Suppose, for example, that in some part of their history all the members of a religious Order decided that they would henceforth be a commercial association — *e.g.*, to run a line of steamers from San Francisco to Hong Kong — or a literary or scientific or antiquarian body to promote some branch of study, it would evidently no longer be identical with the Order set up by the religious founder to promote the salvation of souls.

Or, again, if the means they employ were completely changed, and radically different methods adopted, as, for example, if modern Jesuits or Carmelites or Dominicans put on steel helmets and went forth with rifles and machine guns to fight the enemies of the Church, as the Knights of St. John fought the Saracens, and thus became transformed into a military order.

Application to the Church. — Now, we can apply all this to the Catholic Church in order to find out if she is the organization founded by Christ.

And first, what organization is there in the world to-day that can lawfully claim to be the Church founded by Christ on the ground that its members have been duly and legally admitted by the definite and formal methods prescribed by the Founder?

The answer is clear. The Catholic Church stands forth as the one body which has uninterruptedly, unswervingly, unhesitatingly, peremptorily insisted upon Baptism — the pouring of water on the person with a definite formula of words and a definite intention — as the absolutely essential condition of membership.

Of the Catholic Church alone can you assert with confidence that all her members, all down the ages, have been baptized, have been admitted into the association through this definite, prescribed rite.

The carelessness and indifference of other Christian sects in this respect is a matter of notoriety.

Those engaged in receiving converts to the Catholic Church have daily evidence of it. I have myself received into the Church a grown-up member of a Presbyterian family, and neither she herself nor any of her brothers or sisters had been baptized, nor was there any desire or intention of baptizing them. Some time ago a friend of mine asked a Salvation Army woman whether her daughter (who had met with a serious motor accident, and was lying unconscious) had been baptized. "Oh, no," she answered, "we don't baptize; we receive them under the flag."

Receiving them under the flag may constitute people members of the Salvation Army of General Booth, if that is the rite prescribed by the founder of the Army. But will that constitute them members of the Army of Christ, seeing that they omit the rite prescribed by Him?

Careless Baptisms. — Even in the Church of England the carelessness in this matter of Baptism is admitted by Anglicans themselves. I know, of course, that members of the Ritualistic or High Church Party are careful about Baptism, and take as much trouble about it as Catholics themselves. But the High Church Party are a very small body. Their views and practices are repudiated by the

bulk of Protestants as Romish or Romanizing, so that I can repeat what I have said above: the one body that is consistently faithful to the rite of initiation prescribed by Christ is the Catholic Church.

To Teach Truth. — The second point we referred to previously is this: Is the end which the Catholic Church proposes to herself and faithfully pursues the same end which Christ wished His organization to pursue? Christ clearly intended the organization founded by Him to teach truth. It was to carry on His own work, and He Himself solemnly assures us of His own mission: " For this was I born, and for this came I into the world, that I might give testimony to the truth." And to His disciples: " Go, teach all nations; baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, *teaching* them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you."

And immediately after Christ's departure, we find the Apostles carrying out their mission by *preaching* and *teaching*, and demanding from their hearers the acceptance, by an act of faith, of the message they delivered. So the Apostles claimed to have authority from Our Lord to teach revealed truths.

Now, let us look at the Catholic Church to-day. Is it not a notorious fact that she is the one body

at present in the world that claims to have direct authority to teach God's revealed truths to mankind? She alone claims to be a divinely instituted organization, possessing a peculiar, inherent gift (called Infallibility), whereby she is permanently safeguarded against error in proclaiming her message.

The Catholic Church claims that the end and object of her existence is to *teach* God's revelation. And it is just because she insists on this duty of teaching, just because she never ceases teaching, just because she boldly asserts her infallibility in teaching, that the Catholic Church is so hated by the world.

Remark, I do not merely say that the Catholic Church teaches; so does a university. But the Catholic Church, and she alone, claims to be a divinely instituted teaching body, with an ample charter signed by Christ, her Founder, whereby He guarantees, by His permanent presence, to safeguard her in the discharge of her functions.

Fallible Men. — When I hear a non-Catholic denouncing Infallibility as a monstrous doctrine, or when I read a book on the subject like Dr. Salmon's famous diatribe against Infallibility, I feel inclined to say, sympathetically: " Well, my dear sir, with your idea of a church as a purely human institution, I quite understand that infallibility must

seem absurd. Merely to gather a lot of fallible men and women together into an association or union will not make the association or union infallible. But the Catholic Church claims (and proves the claim) that Christ, the Man-God, promised to be with His Church to save her from error. It is on the strength of that promise that she stands up so boldly as the Teacher of Truth."

You see, then, that the Catholic Church, and she alone, still keeps steadily before her as the object of her existence the end or object prescribed by Christ, the teaching of the truth about God.

Means Prescribed by Christ. — The third point which we laid down to guide us in judging whether an association preserves its continuity deals with the means employed by the association to secure its end. Are they still the means prescribed by the founder? In general, the means prescribed by Christ to His Apostles were prayer, detachment, self-denial, great charity to the poor, the sick, and the fallen, the spirit of poverty, meekness, zeal in preaching the Word, courage in bearing persecution, a boundless trust in God, and a seeking for personal union with Christ as the surest source of success in doing the work. "Without Me you can do nothing."

Now, we ask, are those the means still employed

by the Catholic Church in doing her work? For answer I simply refer you to the story of her preachers and missionaries, say, during the past four hundred years, since the fatal day when Luther flung out the flag of revolt against the Catholic Church, and, Lucifer-like, dragged so many after him in his rebellion.

The Saints. — Read the lives of men like St. Francis Xavier, St. Peter Claver, St. Vincent de Paul, St. Alphonsus Liguori, Blessed Chanel, and hosts of others, mostly Catholic priests, who gave up their lives to one object, the preaching of God's truth in the world, the bringing as many souls as possible under the influence of the Gospel. Read the lives of these men, and see if they are not an exact reproduction of the lives of the Apostles, trained under the eye of Christ Himself in Palestine; the same spirit of poverty, penance, and purity, the same forgetfulness of self, the same enthusiastic love for the poor, the same ardour for prayer and fiery zeal to win souls at any cost. These men are the product of Catholicism, and by the fruit you can judge the tree. Those saintly preachers were but carrying out in practice the principle laid down by the Catholic Church, and applying the means prescribed by her as essential to do God's work well. Hence, to the third question: Is the Catholic Church faithful in applying

the means prescribed by her Founder for attaining the end of her existence? I answer emphatically, "*YES.*"

Characteristics of Catholicism. — To conclude, then. We study the life and teaching of Jesus Christ; we note certain characteristics of His teaching, His methods, His outlook on life; and when we gaze around the world to find a body of men in whose method and teaching we can note those same characteristics, we find them in the Catholic Church, and in the Catholic Church alone.

I think if I were not a member of the Catholic Church (as I happily am), and so could study the Catholic Church from without, amongst the points that would strike me as being both characteristic and indicative of a Divine origin would be these:

1. Her bold, authoritative stand in the matter of teaching truth, and the marvellous unity of belief throughout her wide domain.

2. Her strong, unbending attitude in reference to certain points of the moral law, as, for example, in the matter of divorce. Jesus Christ denounced divorce as immoral and forbidden by God's law. The world scoffs at this and flings as wide as possible the gates of the divorce court. Who is there in the world to raise a cry of protest? Practically only the Catholic Church. She alone stands with

set face and declares unflinchingly that divorce is wrong and immoral, and insists on the sanctity and inviolability of the marriage bond.

3. The calm, unrelenting way in which she requires all, high and low, priest and people, Pope and Cardinal and Bishop, as well as layfolk, to confess their sins and receive absolution from the priest. " Whose sins you shall forgive," said Christ to His Apostles. Only the Catholic Church claims to carry out His words.

4. The Church's stern method of dealing with contumacious, rebellious members who refuse to accept her teaching; she expels them, she excommunicates them. It is a sign of a healthy, living organism that it not only absorbs into its system the food that nourishes it, but also that it can expel and get rid of poisonous, noxious elements that would destroy it. If a healthy person swallows poison, usually the system will react, and by vomiting try to get rid of the dangerous substance. When the body is no longer capable of this reaction it is a sign that death is near. The Anglican Church — *e.g.*, in England — complains of heretics within her borders, of ministers, even bishops, of her communion who deny the fundamental tenets of Christianity; yet she cannot get rid of them. Not so the Catholic Church, as history proves. She remembers Christ's words: " He that will not hear

the Church let him be to you as the heathen and the publican."

5. Finally, the Church's solicitude for those stricken by poverty. It is the Church of the poor. As evidence, need I remind you of her splendid institutions for the relief of poverty, sickness, and misery all over the world, and especially the innumerable schools and educational establishments built at her own expense to save the Faith of her children? She has taken to heart the words of Jesus Christ: "See that you scandalize not one of these little ones, for their angels always see the Face of My Father, who is in heaven."

So I might go on examining and comparing, point by point, the spirit of Jesus, the Man who claimed to be God, and the spirit of that association on earth which claims to be divine, and noticing the wonderful identity between His spirit and hers. The more carefully and the more dispassionately one thus studies the history and methods of the Church, the more one feels convinced that in the Catholic Church we have that Bride unspotted which, according to the Apostle, Jesus came to purchase by His Blood; and that by submitting to her teaching, by listening to her direction, by obeying her behests, we are in truth submitting to the teaching, listening to the direction, obeying the behests of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

Chapter Two

THE SANITY OF CATHOLICISM

In this chapter I propose to show the sanity of Catholicism under two headings:

First, inasmuch as it requires from its adherents an act of faith which is founded, not on mere sentiment or conjecture, or blind prejudice, but upon the rock of reason.

Secondly, inasmuch as it provides suitable and effective means to enable the individual to deal with the problems and difficulties of life; that is, it provides a practical working system, whereby each man can, with reasonable diligence, save his soul from the contamination of sin, lead a pure, honest, upright life, and thus secure his eternal salvation.

THE CATHOLIC ACT OF FAITH

Let us begin then by considering the act of faith, which lies at the root of Catholicism. I will treat the matter in two ways. First, I will try to tell you what faith is *not*. Secondly, I will try to explain more fully what it actually is, and to show you how reasonable it is, and how it befits a sane man to make acts of faith.

1. First, then, a Catholic act of faith is not mere credulity or a blind acceptance of the marvellous without reasonable grounds. Non-Catholics often credit Catholics with this kind of thing, and they imagine Catholics to be folk gaping open-mouthed for any strange story to swallow it down whole.

2. Nor is faith mere sentimentalism — *i.e.*, accepting things as true because they give you a comfortable feeling. The Catholic, in believing, is not guided by emotion, but by conviction.

3. Nor, again, does Catholicism appeal, as the Modernists did, to a special, peculiar faculty — whereby one senses (so to speak) the supernatural — apart from intellectual conviction. The Modernists taught that the department of faith was so distinct from the department of science that whilst by faith, for example, you hold the Resurrection of Christ to be true, you may as a scientific intellectual man deny its truth; and so with all other Christian dogmas. If we Catholics taught such a system, we could hardly claim that Catholicism was a sane religious system.

Now we come to the positive declaration of what faith really is.

Faith in the reasonable and Catholic sense is an extension or application to the spiritual world of an ordinary intellectual process which we all exercise

daily, and without the exercise of which our lives as social beings would be impossible. This process may be defined as an assent of the mind to the truth of a proposition on the testimony of another. We acquire knowledge in two ways — either by direct observation (as, *e.g.*, when you see a man knocked down by a motor car in the street), or through the testimony of others (as when you read an account of the accident in the paper, or learn it from a friend).

This intellectual operation, whereby we assent to the truth of facts because other minds testify to their truth, plays an incessant part in our lives. It is in this way that the greater part of our knowledge comes to us — on the authority of others. If you reflect on the method whereby most people acquire their scientific, geographical, historical, philosophical knowledge, or if you think of the part which books and newspapers play in men's lives, you will, I think, admit the truth of what I say. We each of us investigate a very small portion of the earth's surface on which we live — the part traversed by the tiny track of our perambulations through life. All the other knowledge we have of the world — or of the universe — rests on the testimony of others.

Now, who will say that such faith, such willingness to accept testimony, is unscientific, or un-

worthy of a rational being? Who will suggest that it is not based on sound intellectual principles? It may not be easy for you to trace the process whereby you have come to believe unhesitatingly in the existence say of the satellites of Jupiter, or the sinking of the *Lusitania;* the evidence has come through so many imperceptible channels; but the evidence is such that it excludes all doubt from your minds. If you analyze the process, it comes to this: You convince yourself by direct examination or reasoning of the reliability of the witness, and then you accept his testimony as true. Two things must be clear to you about the witness — (1) that he had opportunity to learn the facts, (2) that he is telling the truth. In other words, that he is not deceived himself, nor wants to deceive you. In a court of law, the judge and jury have to test these two points: Is the witness truthful? Has he knowledge of the facts? Once they are convinced of these two things, then they accept his evidence as reliable.

Now, to the Catholic, his faith is just this process. It is not conjecture, nor is it credulity; but it means assenting to the truth of certain facts on the evidence of a reliable witness. That the facts (*e.g.,* the Trinity, Incarnation, the Real Presence) are beyond our ken and cannot be directly tested by us is no more a difficulty to our accepting them

(when the evidence is sufficient) than the fact that it is utterly beyond my power to investigate directly the murder of Julius Cæsar or the execution of Mary, Queen of Scots, militates against my belief in the violent death of these two eminent persons, since both are vouched for by reliable witnesses.

The steps that lead to faith are these: —

1. I must assure myself that God has actually spoken and communicated knowledge to mankind — that He is a witness to men of truth.

2. I must prove that this knowledge is still available for use, is actually preserved somewhere in the world, is in the keeping of somebody from whom I can obtain it.

3. I learn the contents of the message, and accept it as God's revelation, on His authority. This last mental act is the formal act of faith. The other two processes, for the carrying out of which we rely on our own intellectual activity (aided by God's grace), are preparatory, and lead the way to the formal act of faith.

Suppose you receive a letter from a friend whose word you trust implicitly. A glance at the handwriting and signature assures you that the letter is actually from this friend. You thereby establish its genuineness and authenticity, and even before you read the letter or know its contents you are as-

sured that your friend has sent you a message, and that you have his message in your hands. This corresponds to the preparatory steps (the *præambula fidei,* as theologians call them) described above. Then you read the letter and learn certain facts, which you accept as true on the authority of your friend. This corresponds to the formal act of faith.

But there is a point to be insisted upon with regard to the kind of evidence on which we rely when giving our assent to the propositions that lead to faith. Renan said he would not accept religious truth unless it were proved to him with the clearness of a mathematical theorem. Now, that is a foolish way of talking. Life would be impossible if men followed out this principle in the ordinary details of life.

Take a few examples: —

You sit down to table every day to take your food with no hesitation or misgiving lest perhaps it be poison. When a man comes to breakfast he does not demand of his wife a mathematical proof that it was tea she put in the pot, not arsenic! How does your wife know it is tea? She must trust the grocer. Does she demand an affidavit to that effect? Yet who will say that we are imprudent or foolish, or that we are risking our lives in drinking off a cup of tea without previous

scientific investigation into the ingredients of the teapot?

Again you step into a train or motor car, and thereby place your life absolutely at the mercy of an unknown individual — the engine driver or motorman — about whose antecedents and moral character you know nothing. He may be, and usually is, quite a respectable member of society, with a wife and family and other hostages given to fortune, and has no homicidal tendencies whatever, that might induce him to increase the pace, dash the train to perdition, and send you to a speedy death. But how do you know all this? Do you think it necessary to accost the engine driver thus: — " My dear friend, I am about to entrust my life absolutely to your care. Hence I demand your credentials. Prove to me clearly and scientifically that you are a fit person to take charge of me and my fortunes " ?

Think of what an average engine driver would reply to such a demand — or, perhaps better *not!* You see, of course, the absurdity of such an attitude. But now tell me: *why* do you trust the engine driver? It is really an act of faith, but is it therefore unreasonable? Is it credulity, or superstition, or sentimentalism? Not a bit of it. You know quite well it is an act of faith founded on excellent sensible reasons, which appeal to the intel-

lect, although the chain of argument by which you arrive at the conclusion that you will trust this grimy gentleman in charge of the locomotive is one which you may find it hard to put into words. And I have little doubt that a clever lawyer could make out a very strong case to prove the extreme folly of ever travelling in a train: the engine driver might go mad, or develop a mania for beating records, and try to hit up the pace to a hundred miles an hour, or he might want to commit suicide by jumping off the train, and leave her to dash on without control, and so on.

To give you an example: I knew an elderly gentleman who never in his life would allow a barber to shave him. He said it was too dangerous to allow a stranger to hold a razor so temptingly near to one's throat. Yet millions of bearded, sensible men of every race and clime do actually day by day walk into barbers' shops, submit to the razor, and do not think themselves specially brave for doing so. Yet how would you prove mathematically that they were wise in their action?

Now, I apply all this to the Catholic faith, and I say the argument for the existence of Divine Revelation, and hence the argument on which my act of faith rests, is not a mathematical but a moral argument; but none the less good, strong, and powerful and one which a reasonable man will accept,

and in accepting which he gives evidence of his sanity and soundness of judgment; just as the ordinary man shows his common sense by relying on the testimony of others in the transactions of daily life.

Of course, it will be understood that at present I am not dealing with the special supernatural co-operation of God, which is essential to the eliciting of every act of faith — His co-operation with the intellect by way of illumination to elevate it and make it capable of eliciting this supernatural act of cognition; or His inspiration of the will, which directs or " imperates " the intellect to produce its act. It is this special influence of God on mind and heart which constitutes the " gift " of faith. But at present we are considering the matter merely from the side of the human intellect functioning along the lines proper to it, being moved by apprehension of the truth formally to assent to it.

The Church, then, builds her system on faith, and faith is an intellectual process, founded on intellectual conviction. It is not mere sentiment, mere conjecture or guesswork — nor blind acceptance of certain catchwords or airy principles, which prove on investigation to rest on sand.

Protestantism, on the other hand, is just the opposite of all this. At the Reformation, the " Reformers " called upon the world to reject Catholi-

cism and substitute instead a blind, unreasoning belief in a printed book as the only source and fountainhead of the Divine Revelation in the world; from which book each man must by private investigation make out what he has to believe.

If you demanded (as every sane man has a right to demand), "Why do you want me to accept this book — the Bible — as divine?" there was no reasonable answer forthcoming. Study the Protestant books of theology, old or new, the men who wrote in the sixteenth century or those who wrote in the nineteenth, and you will find either that they never faced that question at all, or else the answer they give is a lame, impotent, unsatisfactory one. In a later chapter we will examine this subject more fully and explain the Catholic position and show how reasonable it is. At present we will consider the principle which was loudly proclaimed by the Reformers as the true source and foundation of religion, the principle of *private judgment — i.e.,* every man must read the Bible to find out for himself what he ought to believe.

Now, how can you call that a sane and reasonable method for discovering truth, which, as a matter of historical fact, has resulted in the creation of a thousand warring sects, many of them teaching absolutely contradictory doctrines, yet each claim-

ing to have discovered the truth by investigation of the Bible? If a man tells me he has invented a peculiarly reliable method for solving mathematical problems (*e.g.*, for adding up long sums in compound addition), and if I ask a dozen different people to apply the method to the same problem, and each of them produces a different answer, and each waves his own particular solution in my face as the absolutely correct and trustworthy answer, what am I to think of the new system? Can I regard it as a safe and reasonable one?

Catholicism, on the other hand, just as it does not demand blind acceptance of the Bible as divine without argument or proof, so neither is it wild or foolish enough to declare that each man must work out his own religious system from the Bible for himself. This would be like saying, that each man must work out his own astronomical system for himself — must be a Copernicus, a Kepler, a Newton rolled into one!

No! Catholicism declares that Christ established a living teacher in the world to keep fast hold of God's revelation, and communicate it to successive generations of men.

How do sane men act when they wish to have their children educated — *i.e.*, admitted to the great storehouse of human knowledge? They send them to school — to a living teacher. The wisdom

of ages has decided that the best way to preserve and propagate truth is to set up, not merely libraries, where knowledge is preserved (as it were) in cold storage, but schools, colleges, universities, where living minds congregate to collect and develop and hand on the wisdom of the world. We look to the living teacher to help us all through life.

The mother sowing the first seeds of knowledge in the mind of her child; the schoolmaster drilling his pupils in the rudiments of learning; the university professor lecturing to a cultured audience; Demosthenes kindling the flame of patriotism in the Athenian people; Chatham, Pitt, Fox, Edmund Burke addressing the House of Commons; all the great orators, all the Christian preachers from St. Paul to Lacordaire; all the great tragedians interpreting the world of human action — what are they all but so many proofs that the judgment of mankind demands for the effective preservation and propagation of truth, not books, not mere lifeless monuments, speechless symbols and records, but the living mind, the living voice, the living soul, that can kindle in other souls the flame of knowledge that is blazing within itself.

Knowledge or truth is not a merchandise that can be transferred in bulk as you hoist a bale of goods from a steamer to a railway truck. Truth is a living thing. It must grow in the mind as the

fruit grows on the tree, and that growth must be promoted by contact of living mind with living mind.

God knows all this as well as we do. And when He would teach the world truth, He sent to it, not merely a book, a scroll of mysterious characters, for men to puzzle out as best they might, but a Living Mind, the master mind of Jesus of Nazareth. He sent a Living Teacher — a Man palpitating with life in its most intense form — a Man with the most comprehensive intellect ever created, with a grandeur of character, an elevation of soul beyond all that men had ever dreamed of: with a marvellous gift of eloquence, and unrivalled power of persuasion; in short, with every glorious quality required to constitute the perfect living teacher.

Now, how is the influence of this Teacher to continue in the world? If Jesus is God, surely the influence of His glorious intellect is not to be ephemeral — is not to pass away after a few years of outward visible presence here on earth. No! His work as a Teacher is to continue. He has come to teach, not one generation, but all generations, for all time to come. That is a wonderful claim — yet Jesus deliberately and solemnly makes that claim.

After He had commanded His disciples to go and teach all nations, He makes in one brief, pregnant sentence this momentous promise: " Behold I am

with you all days, even to the consummation of the world." "I, the Living Teacher, come from God, am with you, teaching My doctrine down all the ages, as men succeed each other upon the stage of time, until the race of man ceases to exist."

And how does Jesus set about having His teaching work continued in the world? Jesus Christ is the sanest man in all history, and His system will be founded on sanity and common sense. It will not be left hanging in the air without a reasonable foundation. Has He not Himself uttered a warning about the importance of building one's house, not on sand, but on a rock? And so He institutes a living organization to perpetuate His teachings. "Go forth and teach all nations the things you have learned from Me." He does not say: "Tell men to study the Bible privately, each for himself, and then find out what to believe." He says: "Go, and teach My doctrine, and I promise to be with you in fulfilling this duty. I will send the Holy Ghost to open your minds to understand the truth, so that you can instruct others. As the Father hath sent Me, so I send you."

The Father sent Jesus as the Living Teacher to the world; so Jesus sends His Apostles as living teachers to instruct mankind.

When the servant of Queen Candace (as told in Acts viii) was riding along in his chariot, reading

the Prophet Isaias, and Philip was miraculously sent to aid him, although the servant was reading the Bible eagerly to get light about God, still he was unable to interpret the Prophet until the living teacher came to instruct him, and then the light dawned, he believed and was baptized. That scene was a symbol of Catholicism.

You, too, perhaps are studying the Bible, or perhaps the Book of Nature, eagerly scanning it to glean some knowledge of the God that made you. But you grope in the dark until you fall under the spell of the living teaching authority of the Catholic Church, and then suddenly the shadows lift and all becomes clear.

An honest inquirer who studies the Gospel record must conclude thus: If this Man, Jesus of Nazareth, be really a divine teacher sent to enlighten the world, and if His mission is to be perpetuated all through history, then there *must* be still somewhere in the world *to-day* a living teaching authority representing Him, speaking for Him, the heir of His promise, and working under the spell of His presence.

I do not say merely there must be disciples of His in the world, or a school of thought representing Him and propagating His views — as, for example, schools of philosophy propagate the ideas of Plato, Aristotle, Epicurus, or Kant. No! We say,

if the Gospel record be true, there must still survive in the world a *living teaching authority,* divinely instituted, founded by Christ Himself, safeguarded against error by Him, enjoying all the privileges involved in the splendid promise: " Behold I am with you all days even to the consummation of the world."

And now, if our unbiased and thoughtful enquirer rises up from his perusal of the New Testament and looks out across the world to discover this living organ of truth, he will not have long to search.

One outstanding body, *and one alone,* claims to be just this — the Living Organ appointed to teach God's revelation to all mankind. Other Christian sects, whilst they differ in every imaginable way as to doctrine, ceremonies and practices, agree on this one point: they do *not* claim to be a living, authoritative teacher of Divine truth; whereas the Catholic Church does make the claim, and makes it unhesitatingly, persistently, obstinately, dogmatically, with all the vehemence and intolerance of denial with which a man will assert his own identity. And for the same reason — *viz.*, the Catholic Church has the interior consciousness of her Divine mission, just as a man has the interior consciousness of his own identity — that he is himself, and no one else.

And this claim is made, not by a small sect in some remote corner of Asia or Europe or America, but by the Catholic Church, which is the most notorious and conspicuous fact in the history of the world. The mere fact that the Catholic Church, and she alone, makes this claim, and has always made this claim, to be the living teacher of Christ's truth, is *prima facie* evidence that she is actually what she claims to be — Christ's divinely appointed mouthpiece — since it is the first essential of one entrusted with such a mission to be conscious of the responsibility.

But, then, on closer investigation, our enquirer will find this Catholic body, which thus boldly makes this claim, claims also the further prerogative of *immunity from error* when actually fulfilling her mission as teacher of God's truth. And the fact that the Catholic Church makes this claim to infallibility will — if the inquirer is a sane and reasonable man — go to confirm his conviction that in the Catholic Church he has found the object of his search.

For I assert it is simply impossible — it is ludicrous — for a body of men to claim Divine authority to teach revelation without claiming also a divinely guaranteed immunity from error in delivering that teaching.

In other words, if Christ instituted an organiza-

tion expressly to preserve and propagate His teachings in the world, He must also have made that body infallible in discharging its functions. And if such a body does not claim the privilege of being infallible, then it has no reasonable right to claim to be God's mouthpiece for teaching truth. This principle seems almost self-evident. For see what the denial of it leads to. The Church in effect would say: " I have Christ's authority to teach His doctrine and to demand from you the submission of faith; still, what I am teaching may perhaps be wrong. I have no guarantee of immunity from error; yet Christ commands me to teach." Surely that would be a ludicrous and impossible position.

The very first quality which we demand from a witness who claims credence for his assertions is that he *knows* the truth and guarantees that he is telling the truth. The witness who says: " These are the facts, but yet they may be all wrong," is simply laughed at. Yet, strange to say, it is just this reasonable claim on the part of the Church to know what she is talking about, and to be quite definitely sure that her message is correct, that provokes the fiercest opposition and resentment in the world.

Now, I hope we have made good the first point in the argument for the Sanity of Catholicism — namely that in its act of faith Catholicism ap-

peals to reason, makes no claim except on reasonable, verifiable grounds, such as will bear the closest scrutiny on the part of intelligent unbiased enquirers.

PRACTICAL MEANS TO HELP THE INDIVIDUAL

Next we will deal with the Sanity of Catholicism as shown in the way it provides for the spiritual welfare of the individual soul.

Catholicism and the Individual Soul. — To be very practical in one's methods is a sign of sanity and common sense. Building castles in the air is an occupation which empty-headed, unpractical dreamers are fond of indulging in. To entertain foolish schemes and talk of accomplishing them when, as a matter of fact, adequate means are entirely absent is the mark of an unbalanced mind.

What I want to show here is that Catholicism does not merely set before us a high ideal, does not merely appeal to the imagination and intellect, as do philosophy, art, literature; does not merely speculate in a graceful, captivating way about life and immortality; but takes practical, efficacious steps and supplies definite and suitable means to enable men actually to attain the noble ends proposed to them.

And first let me draw your attention to what I

may call the individualism of the Catholic Church, the extraordinary care she lavishes on each individual soul entrusted to her. This care is the logical outcome of Catholicism — of the doctrine so insistently taught by its Founder, Jesus Christ, about the supreme value of each single human soul.

The immortal thinking soul it is that explains all the rest of the visible universe. The whole radiant world of creatures is in God's design but the setting for the incomparable jewel of the soul. The material universe is exquisitely, intoxicatingly beautiful — so beautiful that for love of it men forget its Maker. The fascination of the creature blinds them to the infinite perfection of the Creator. Yet, what after all is the meaning of expressions such as these: " Nature is very beautiful: the midnight sky is majestic, solemn, imposing "? In using such expressions we are simply describing the emotions produced in the human soul by the contemplation of those creatures of God. To what purpose would light exist were there no eye to utilize it? What end would the harmony and grandeur of the material universe serve if there were no human soul to appreciate it, and to give expression to its feelings of admiration by praise?

The thinking soul is the eye of the universe to contemplate its beauty, the tongue of the universe to proclaim the glory of Him who made it, the

heart of the universe to love Him in return for His benefits.

The soul, then, is the jewel hidden away in this material existence; and to rescue it from dangerous surroundings and secure to it for ever the life that alone can satisfy it is the aim and object of the Catholic Church. Hence the minute care she bestows on each individual soul. From the first moment of the child's appearance on the bustling stage of life until he breathes his last sigh and closes his eyes in death, the Catholic Church is busy about the soul. Her Sacraments await him at every stage of his journey to God. Through the gate of Baptism the child enters the fold — receives the freedom of the city of God — becomes a citizen of the Church. Then by the Sacrament of Confirmation, this citizen is made into a soldier to fight in defence of his country. But the citizen, as well as the soldier, needs food to support his strength and nourish the new and wonderful life communicated to him, and so the Church spreads for him the banquet of the Body of Christ.

These three Sacraments — Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist — are intended for all, and are to give positive supernatural life to the soul and to nourish that life. But, alas! the soldier may fall wounded on the battlefield: the weapons of the enemy may prevail, and he may be lying in danger

of death. Every army must have its ambulance corps, its surgeons and its remedies; so, too, the Church. And so with the Sacrament of Penance she runs to help her wounded sons — binds up their hurts, and tenderly nurses them back to life.

So it is that Jesus has provided for the welfare of the individual soul in its health and its sickness.

But then another important crisis may come, and usually does come, when the life of one is to be merged into the life of another, and two souls, through the gate of marriage, enter into a new world of duties and responsibilities; two lives that have hitherto flowed as separate streams are united as one river flowing to the ocean of eternity. Here, too, the Church is waiting, and her Sacrament is ready to bless the union of man and wife — to speed them on their way and supply the special spiritual help they need for the new existence on which they have entered.

Or perhaps a man, instead of being attracted by an earthly bride, dreams rather of walking in the footsteps of Christ — whose Bride was the Church of living souls — and would consecrate his life as a priest to the work of saving mankind. Then, too, the Church stoops to consecrate him with the Sacrament of Holy Orders.

And then — there is a final turning in the road which awaits us all — a turning that will open up

strange new vistas — when we shall need special help: that is death. And it is for her dying children the Catholic Church is specially solicitous. She is ever on guard, sentrylike, at that dread portal, and with her last anointing strengthens the soul for its passage to eternity.

During the Great War, a wonderful impression was created on those outside the Catholic Church by the tender, practical, heroic way in which the priests of the Catholic Church ministered to the wants of the wounded and dying soldiers on the battlefields and in the hospitals.

Men were struck by the contrast between the attitude and method of the Catholic priest and the methods (or rather want of method) of the clergy of other denominations. And what was it made the difference? Just this — the Catholic priest came with the Catholic Sacraments in his hands: he came to whisper words of Absolution for sin, to feed the soul of the dying man with the Eucharist, and to anoint him with the consecrated oil of Extreme Unction: he came with the gifts of pardon, of spiritual nourishment, and of strength. Why was the priest — *i.e.*, the official representative of Catholicism — able to do this? Because Catholicism is a sane, practical system, which has at its disposal definite means of helping souls in their spiritual needs. The priest, kneeling beside the

dying soldier on the battlefields of France or Belgium, did his work well just because he represented the Universal Church. He spoke to the dying man, not with the lips of a private individual, but with the voice of Christ's organ for teaching truth — he spoke with the lips of Christ Himself.

Now, I would ask you to consider more in detail the Catholic system of providing for the spiritual welfare of the individual soul, and to note the definite, careful, sensible way in which the Catholic Church ministers to the wants of her children. She knows well that to minister to man's spiritual wants effectively she must supply three things: —

Light to satisfy and guide his intellect,

Peace and consolation to satisfy his heart,

Strength and endurance to support his will.

If the Catholic Church cannot supply the necessary nutriment for those three faculties of man, then that Church is incomplete and ineffective and unjustified in her claims. We shall see that it is just those three good things: Truth, Peace, and Strength, that this great practical religion offers to her children — these constitute her merchandise, in which she traffics and offers to all who are willing to barter with her.

And first, with regard to teaching Truth. Alone of all religious bodies in the world the Catholic Church claims to have a divine mandate to teach

revealed Truth. And the practical result of that conviction is the extraordinary interest she takes in the education of her children. Other religious bodies may calmly acquiesce in the control of schools by secular authority: the Catholic Church — never! Catholics may be compelled to pay taxes to support secular schools, but that will not prevent them from imposing fresh taxes on themselves to build Catholic schools where Catholic children may receive proper instruction in the truths of religion, and may be brought up in a thoroughly Catholic atmosphere.

She knows, of course, that thought rules the world. As a man thinks, so he lives. History is only the working out in practice of the ideas that men conceive — just as a building is the result of the architect's plan. The decay of a nation, like the moral ruin of an individual, is the result of the pursuit of wrong ideas. To regenerate a man the first thing is to get at his thoughts.

Sow a thought, and reap an act.

Sow an act, and reap a habit.

Sow a habit, and reap a destiny.

And so this great mother of souls shoulders the responsibility of teaching these truths, and in her schools, no less than in her churches, keeps ever instilling the divinely taught lessons which she has been commissioned to teach. She holds the key of

Christ's granaries (as He Himself expressed it), and is ever solicitous to deal out in due time just measures of wheat to feed hungry souls. Look up at this strong castle, built by Christ to stand four-square to all the storms of impiety and unbelief — to breast unswervingly the flood of paganism which Christ foresaw would beat pitilessly against that great tower. Listen to the Master Builder's words: " Upon a rock I will build My Church: and all the fury of hell shall not prevail to tear down those strong walls — because they are — by Me — founded upon a rock."

Look out across the world to-day, and see how literally that prophecy is fulfilled. Apart from Catholicism, a lamentable decay of religious belief is evident on all sides, and the state of things foreseen and foretold by Newman is rapidly coming about, when the world will be divided into two hostile camps: the forces of Atheism (of unbelief and denial of God) on one side, the adherents of Catholicism on the other.

To illustrate this, consider these few details about one small but important portion of the English-speaking world — Great Britain. According to recent statistics the population of Great Britain (*i.e.*, England and Scotland) is about 38 millions. Of these, about two millions are Catholics. Of the remaining 36 millions it is calculated that not

more than 10 millions attend a place of Christian worship, or can be called in any sense adherents of Christianity. Making allowance for about 150,000 Jews and leaving a wide margin for other sects, there remains a mass of 23 or 24 millions of people of whom the only thing we can say is that they are, to all intents and purposes, pagans.

Surrounded by this surging sea of unbelief, is it any wonder that the Catholic Church is so terribly insistent on the duty of safeguarding her children's faith by securing their education in a Catholic atmosphere? And surely this insistence is as much a mark of her sanity and robust common sense as it is for men in time of plague or pestilence to adopt vigorous means to secure themselves against contagion.

In order to appreciate better the reasonableness of Catholicism, I will now ask you to consider, not only the fact that the Catholic Church is so faithful in her efforts to teach Catholic truth to each of her children, but also the wonderful manner in which she actually brings home to the heart and mind and conscience of each the great fundamental truths which lie at the basis of all true happiness, whether for time or eternity.

These three truths are: — First, the existence of a personal God our Creator and Master. Sec-

ondly, the freedom and responsibility of the human will. Thirdly, the immortality of the soul.

Atheism, Materialism, Agnosticism mean the denial or calling in question of these three truths, and hence the undermining of the foundations on which true happiness in this world and in the next must rest.

Catholicism proclaims these truths — champions them inexorably in the face of a protesting world; but she does more than this — she adopts measures to bring them home in a living, practical way to the individual soul.

" God exists — He is your Creator — you are bound to worship Him; and therefore I require you to hear Mass every Sunday in order to fulfil this fundamental duty of adoration."

So speaks the Church. Every Sunday all your life long, from the age of seven years until you die (unless prevented by good reasons), you must come to church to fulfil the duty of adoring your Maker. You see how in this simple, practical way the duty of adoring God is brought home to the individual Catholic.

To the Protestant, going to church is a matter of choice — the Catholic Church insists upon this weekly act of homage as a grave duty.

And then think of the infinite difference between what awaits the Catholic when he goes to Mass

and the service in a non-Catholic place of worship. The Catholic goes to offer up with the priest the sacrifice of Christ's Body and Blood. To the Catholic, entering his church means entering the audience chamber of the great King, where Jesus Christ is actually present. Hence the atmosphere of reverence, of prayer, of adoration which normally prevails during the time of Mass, and especially at the moment of Consecration.

Even the most careless Catholic must be affected by fulfilling this weekly duty of worship. But in the case of the Catholic who hears Mass devoutly, who prays earnestly and fervently during the Holy Sacrifice, a very wonderful influence is exercised; his soul is fed with heavenly food to sustain and strengthen him against the inroads of the deadly, insidious, poisonous germs of infidelity and immorality with which the air all round him is so heavily laden.

The second great fundamental truth insistently taught by Catholicism is the freedom of the will and the moral responsibility of each individual for his own acts; and hence the nature and consequences of sin. But again Catholicism is not satisfied with merely telling you that you have free will, and are responsible to God for your actions and words and thoughts; but it says to you, " You must go to Confession. You must tell your sins,

and make acts of contrition, and get absolution from the priest."

Now, I want you to think a little about the sane and practical nature of this great institution of the Sacrament of Penance, or Confession. The Church is here to help us in our difficulties. What is the supreme difficulty which each child of Adam has to contend with on the road of life? What is the great obstacle that bars his path to God, to overcome which he is in sad need of supernatural assistance? History and our own experience tell us: it is *sin*. The weakness of our nature, the lower, earthward tendencies in us, drag us away from God and the higher things of the spirit. What do we require to lift us up?

First and foremost, to be cleansed from sin, to be assured of pardon for past sin; and then a strengthening of the spiritual element within us to enable us to conquer passion and avoid sin for the future.

These things are provided for in the Catholic system by the Sacrament of Penance.

This Sacrament has two aspects, the one painful and humiliating, the other comforting, strengthening, elevating.

Confession of one's sins to a priest is often a painful and penitential ordeal, which we naturally shrink from; but then the assurance of pardon given by the priest as God's representative brings

a peace and joy to the soul which only those can understand who have actually felt it.

Confession is often a stumbling-block in the way of would-be converts. To kneel down and say, " I have sinned — I have violated God's law in this or that particular way," is hurtful to our pride. The difficulty men find in telling their sins is a strong testimony to the sense of shame for having committed sin which is deeply rooted in the human heart. We have offended God, the Giver of the law; we know it, and yet we can hardly bring ourselves to admit the fact to a fellow-creature.

And this painful duty of Confession is, of all others, the most salutary to make us rise up from sin and to deter us from committing new sins. It is like the surgeon's knife: it is sharp, it cuts deep; but it pains only to heal, it wounds to give relief.

When in the sixteenth century certain innovators set about reforming the Church they very quickly got rid of this duty of confessing one's sins, and in doing so cut off one of the most efficacious of all means for cleansing and healing the soul. Now the world is beginning to realize the disaster which the Reformation was, and is clamoring to get back Confession, or something equivalent to it. Men realize that what the heart overcharged with grief and misery needs above all for its relief is a

sympathetic ear into which it can pour its tale of sorrow, shame, and weakness. The mere unburdening itself to another who feels and understands and pities is the greatest of human consolations. But suppose the listener to be, not only a trustworthy friend, but a divinely appointed comforter, with supernatural powers to heal and soothe the bruised soul, one who holds the place of Christ Himself, who, speaking in Christ's name and with His authority, assures the sinner that his sins are washed away, and that he is reconciled to God — that he can lift his head and look God in the face again; if an institution like that were possible, surely we would call it a blessed thing indeed? Well, that is exactly what the Catholic Sacrament of Penance is. You go to a priest and tell your sins: it hurts just as it hurts to drink bitter medicine or submit to the lancet; but then the blessed words of absolution are spoken, *Ego te absolvo,* and you rise up from your knees a new man, with the fire of courage burning in your heart — the light of hope kindled in your eye — ready to face life again.

You may read something of the dreadful statistics of suicide in the civilized world in more modern times, and especially in Europe since the Reformation. It is well known that suicide has been much more common amongst Protestants than in

Catholic Communities.[1] In England and Wales, *e.g.*, during the years 1861–1906, the average annual number of suicides steadily increased from 65 to 100 for every million of living inhabitants.

May we not reasonably assert that this terrible increase in acts of self-destruction and despair is to a large extent the effect of the abolition of the Catholic confessional? Confession is the safety valve for the overcharged soul which is being dragged down to despair by the worries of life. The soul needs to hear amidst the storm of life's troubles the comforting voice of Christ saying, " Be of good heart, it is I; be not afraid " — as the frightened disciples heard it across the storm-tossed waters of Lake Galilee. Well, it is from the Catholic priest in the Sacrament of Penance each individual soul can hear those words addressed to itself personally by Christ's representative.

Atheism, Agnosticism, Paganism look out on life with eyes of despair. The pessimism of unbelief finds its only relief, and its only logical issue, in self-destruction.

Confession is the Sacrament of Hope: it is set up as a strong barrier against the flood-tide of despair; and I ask you, is not that religious system a sane, a reasonable one which insistently reminds

[1] See " Encyclopaedia Britannica," " Suicide," Vol. 26, page 50 (11th ed.).

the world that Christ came as a Messenger of Hope, and because He wants us to hope bids us confess our sins and hear the words of pardon from the lips of His priest?

Hope is sanity; despair is madness and folly; and just because Catholicism is the religion of hope, it is also the religion of sanity and common sense.

By this Sacrament of Confession, then, and by obliging us to go regularly to Confession, the Catholic Church in a practical manner keeps her children ever mindful of their responsibility to God as free agents, and the necessity of repentance and atonement when sin has been committed.

There remains the third great fundamental truth of Catholicism besides the existence of God and of free-will — *viz.*, the immortality of the soul, and the soul's destiny — to possess and enjoy God for ever in Heaven.

Here, again, let us see what practical means the Catholic Church adopts in order to bring home this doctrine daily and hourly to the minds and hearts of her children. The whole organization, method and system of Catholicism turns upon this doctrine of immortality — it is the pivot around which all the rest revolves. Hence, every word and action, every ceremony and doctrine, of the Catholic Church presupposes, or calls attention to, our im-

mortal destiny. Her eyes are fixed, not on this world, but on the next. But amidst all her doctrines, sacraments, and practices there is one supreme doctrine that brings us into immediate contact with this fundamental principle of immortality — brings us into constant relationship with that existence after death to which we are all hastening — the doctrine of Christ's Real Presence in the Eucharist.

That doctrine includes the following points: —

1. When the bread and wine have been consecrated at Mass, then Jesus Christ, the living Man, is truly and substantially present just as He was on Easter Sunday, when He appeared to Mary Magdalen at the tomb, or to the disciples in the supper-room.

2. This belief in the real living Presence of Jesus presupposes the Death and Resurrection of Christ — *i.e.*, it presupposes His existence after death in a glorified, risen body. It is with the risen Christ we are brought into contact in Holy Communion.

Why did Christ rise from the dead? Was it not to solve for us the riddle of death? All down the ages men had been asking the question: What is death? And none could answer. They saw generation after generation of mankind passing through the dark gates of death, but none ever returned to say what had befallen them. Jesus the

Man God came and faced death. He, too, passed through those dread portals; but He did what no other man had ever done: He came back from the tomb to tell us of the life beyond the grave. Jesus came back as the herald of immortality — to assure us in His own living Person what our lot is to be when death claims us as it claimed Him.

In Holy Communion you come to receive and converse with the risen Christ; and He comes to refresh in your soul, too, the belief in your immortal destiny — He comes to strengthen and cheer you in the great struggle for immortal life which is occupying us here below.

See how sane and practical Catholicism is — sane and practical, because its thoughts are the thoughts of Christ Himself. The Catholic Church does not merely speculate, as the great philosophers speculated, on the immortality of the soul; she is not satisfied with merely preaching the doctrine; she does something more wonderful, more piercing and miraculous; she cries out, " Come and taste immortal life here in this Sacrament. Here is the King of Immortality come in person to prepare you for your eternal destiny."

Immortality means the possession of God for ever, and of that we get a foretaste and a pledge in this great Sacrament.

Chapter Three

THE INSPIRATION OF THE BIBLE

If one were to reckon up and estimate carefully all the various influences which have played a part in the moulding of the Christian mind and character, and in the development of our modern civilization, perhaps the most important of these influences would prove to be the belief of mankind in the inspiration of the Bible.

Think for a moment of the part the Bible played in the world of pre-Christian thought. For hundreds of years before Christ came, the Books of the Old Testament were the source whence the Jews, both in Palestine and in their various scattered communities, drew their religious knowledge. The Hebrew Bible, and in later days the Greek Septuagint Version, was the text book for children in their schools, their Book of Liturgy for the services in the Synagogue, their Ritual for the divine worship in the Temple of Jerusalem.

When Christ came He adopted this Jewish Bible, and completed it by adding to it His own divine wisdom: for the second part of the Bible, which

we call the New Testament, is the record of the life, thoughts, and teaching of Jesus of Nazareth, along with the story of how His teaching and Personality affected the world around Him. From the days of Christ to our own, no book can be mentioned that has exercised such extraordinary influence over men's minds as this collection of writings.

The Bible in the Catholic Church. — In the Catholic Church the Bible has ever been the foundation of all other religious books whatsoever. The Missal, or Book for the Celebration of Mass, is almost entirely a collection of passages or citations from the Bible, both Old and New Testaments. The Office Book, or Breviary, in like manner, consists mainly of the Psalms, extracts from other parts of the Bible, and Commentaries on the Gospels. Her books of devotion, the writings of the Fathers, the theological treatises of the Doctors and Schoolmen, the apologetic writings and sermons of her preachers, are all of them founded upon, interwoven with, the thoughts, sentiments, and language of the Bible.

One significant fact shows the position which the Bible held in the religious life of the Church. When printing was invented, about the year 1450, the first book printed was the Vulgate, or Latin Bible, and within fifty years no less than one hun-

dred and fifty editions of the Latin Vulgate had issued from the printing presses of Europe.[1]

Books are produced to meet the demands of the public; and we know that if a book is repeatedly issued, it shows the public wants it.

Protestantism. — At the time of the great religious upheaval of the sixteenth century, when other doctrines and dogmas were flung to the winds, faith in the Bible as the Word of God, and the one reliable source of religious information, was trumpeted forth as the principle on which the great "Reform" was to be based. Hence, a new impetus was given to the printing and reading of the Bible; new translations were produced, not always too faithful, it is true; and many strange liberties were taken with the text, whole books being sometimes cut out as uncanonical merely at the whim of a reforming editor. Luther, *e.g.*, disliked the Catholic Epistle of St. James, because St. James' clear teaching about the necessity of good works clashed with Luther's doctrine about salvation by faith alone; so he called it an "epistle of straw," and rejected it from his Bible.

But still, for the time being, the printing and study of the Bible in the vernacular was greatly increased, and the Sacred Books became the staple reading of millions of folk all over the world.

[1] See Grannan, "General Introduction to the Bible," Vol. I., p. 137.

We shall see that this new-found zeal and fervor about the Bible was in reality a snare, leading men in the end to reject the Bible altogether. It happens to nations as it happens to individuals — an exaggerated and unreasoning adhesion to one idea generally leads to a violent reaction in the opposite direction. Like Shakespeare's character, those Protestants "protested so much" about their love and reverence for the Bible that one suspected their motive; and time has justified the apprehension, for now, alas! even the authorized ministers and preachers of the reformed religions are publicly calling in question the inspiration and divine character of the Bible, and actually regard the idea of its being an inspired book as one of those superstitions which must be discarded in the advancing light of scientific knowledge. However, this rationalistic attitude is largely the product of the past hundred years or so, and it is safe to state that up to the nineteenth century no book at all can be compared with the Bible in the influence it exercised on the thoughts and principles and lives of mankind.

Secret of Influence of the Bible. — Now, what is the secret of this influence? How has the Bible secured this unique position in the estimation of the civilized world? The answer is a simple one: because men regarded the Bible as an inspired book,

as a set of writings produced under the action of the Holy Ghost; so that in those books they believed that they possessed a collection of God's own thoughts — the truths of morality and religion which God wished to place at the disposal of mankind for its guidance and instruction. In other words, the Bible was the only authentic book of information about God and the things of the other world.

Its Answer to the Riddle of Life. — The question of man's destiny is the supreme problem of life which modern unbelievers tell us is insoluble. There is no answer to the Riddle of the Universe. "Hence, let us eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow we die." The Bible is occupied with this problem of man's destiny, and claims to offer a definite solution, and claims that it is the true solution, inasmuch as it is supplied by the Master of all problems, God Himself. And it is because a great multitude of mankind accepted that claim as genuine, and believed the Bible to be in very truth God's teaching about the soul and its destiny, that the Bible has exerted such enormous influence and played such a wonderful part in the history of human thought.

Doctrine of Inspiration. — My purpose here is to examine the Catholic doctrine of Biblical Inspiration. It is one of the essential and funda-

mental doctrines of Catholicism, and I propose to deal with it under three headings: —

1. In the first place, we may consider the nature of Biblical Inspiration, as understood in the Catholic Church, and see how reasonable the Catholic point of view is.

2. In the second place, we shall discuss the grounds or reasons for asserting that the Bible is inspired. That is, we shall try to answer the question: How do you know that the Bible, or any book in the Bible, or any writing whatsoever, is inspired by God? And we shall show that the Catholic Church alone gives a reasonable answer to this question.

3. Lastly, we shall ask ourselves: What are the effects of Inspiration? If you were inspired by God to write a book (as the Evangelists were), how would that book differ from one written without such Inspiration? Does Inspiration furnish a divine guarantee for the historic accuracy of every assertion in such a book?

This, then, will be our triple division. First, the nature of Inspiration and its reasonableness; secondly, the proof that it exists; and, lastly, its effects.

Nature of Biblical Inspiration. — The word Inspiration is in constant daily use amongst us. We talk of an inspired article in the morning news-

paper, or the " inspiration " of the poet. It is derived from the Latin word *inspirare,* meaning to " breathe into," and the general idea expressed is one with which we are all familiar — *viz.,* that one person may use another as the medium to convey his thoughts. If you call a messenger and instruct him to deliver a certain message for you, you are practising inspiration. The boy in delivering your message is acting as your spokesman, is transmitting your thoughts, and you, as principal agent, are responsible for the effects produced by the message; he is merely your instrument, even though he is also using his own intellect and his own power of free will. And if you could, in some mysterious way, control this messenger, whilst actually delivering the message, so that he would say exactly what you wished him to say, and nothing else, then you would have an almost exact counterpart to the Divine Inspiration of the Scriptures.

You see, there is nothing extravagant or unreasonable in the idea of Inspiration. If we can send a message, convey an idea, impart information through the medium of another human mind and will, may not the Divine Mind also use the human intellect and will to convey Its message to mankind?

Details. — Let me now explain a little more fully

the details of this teaching. Catholic doctrine states that the Books of the Bible have been written by men under the direct and immediate control and guidance of the Holy Spirit, so that the things they wrote are the thoughts which God wished to be presented to us as His thoughts and His message to us. In other words, the effect of Inspiration is, that God is truly the Author of Holy Scripture; which doctrine is summed up in the statement: The Bible is the Word of God.

When theologians analyze this more fully, they assert that three elements go to constitute Inspiration: —

1. A supernatural impulse given by God to the will of the writer urging him to produce the book in question.

2. A special supernatural *light* given to his intellect to enable him to select and set down the ideas which God wants to have written down; a kind of selective grace. Or, if necessary, God specially reveals to the writer the facts or mysteries which He wishes to communicate, although revelation is not essential to Inspiration, as we shall see.

3. A special assistance given by God to the writer, when actually writing, to safeguard him against error, so that he expresses exactly what God wants him to express.

These three elements are required in order that

the resulting document may truly be ascribed to God as its Author.

What Formally Constitutes an Author. — We shall understand better why theologians require these elements for Inspiration if we examine more fully the idea of Authorship. In the production of any writing or document three parts may be distinguished: —

1. Supplying the ideas to be expressed.

2. Selecting the words or symbols to convey those ideas.

3. Setting down those symbols in visible, durable form.

These three elements may proceed from different individuals. One man may suggest the thought, another clothe it in words, and a third write, or type, or print it.

Now, corresponding to this triple division, one can distinguish a triple sense of the question: Who wrote this? If I hold up a document and ask, "Who wrote this?" that may mean, Who put pen to paper and actually wrote it out? This is what the question would mean if one were examining a child's copy book. In that case the words chosen or the ideas expressed are of no consequence, only the formation of the letters.

Secondly, "Who wrote this?" might mean, Who is responsible for the language employed? So, if I

hold up a German Bible and ask the question, the answer might be, " Martin Luther wrote it," meaning that he translated it. Such a translator is not the author of the ideas, but of the language employed to represent them.

Lastly, " Who wrote this? " means: Who is responsible for the ideas contained in this book? even though the actual version may be a translation into a language of which the original author knows nothing. Now, when we talk of a man being the author of a book, it is clear we do not mean that he actually penned or personally printed the book. Nor does it always mean that he actually selected the words. Thus, if a merchant tells his typist to write a letter to a customer, merely outlining the ideas to be embodied, but leaving the mode of expression to the typist, the merchant is truly the author of the letter; no one will ascribe it to the typist.

So, also, I might say: " Listen to what St. Augustine says," and then read out a passage in modern English, a language of which St. Augustine never heard; it was not even in existence when he lived. Evidently I mean that Augustine is the author of the thoughts enshrined in this modern English dress.

The word Author, then (Latin, *Auctor*), means the person from whom the thing proceeds as its principal efficient cause. I say *principal* cause;

this does not exclude the employing subordinate instrumental causes to aid him in producing his work, whether these instruments are inanimate, such as pen or brush, or rational beings, like a clerk or typist.

To say that John Smith is author of a book implies these two things: First, he it is that produced and arranged the ideas contained therein; he selected them, and as selected by him they represent what he wished to have written down. Secondly, he caused them to be written down; he gave the impulse that has resulted in their finding outward expression in writing.

God, the Author of Scripture. — Now, it is in this sense that God is the Author of Scripture. God's plan is to deal with us in a human way. And just as He became man in order to speak to us with human lips and to love us with a human heart, so He wished to convey His thoughts to us in a human way, and wished to perpetuate them by using the ordinary means in use among men — *viz.*, Writing. Moreover, in His work God always wishes to associate His creatures with Himself as His fellow workers. This explains the whole Sacramental System of the Catholic Church, where Christ is working incessantly and producing marvellous supernatural results through the ministry of human agents.

The priest at the altar and in the confessional, at the bedside anointing the sick or at the font baptizing the child, is simply Christ's instrument. It is always Christ Who, with and through His human representative, baptizes, anoints, absolves and consecrates.

This close union of the human and the divine to produce supernatural effects is found also in the composition of the Bible. And it is this marvellous influence of the uncreated mind of God, illuminating, elevating, assisting the finite mind of the human writer who is His instrument, that explains the unique nature of the inspired writings.

Difficulties. — But now, someone may object: How can God be called the Author of Sacred Scripture in the sense that He supplies the thoughts or ideas, when it is evident that many parts of the Bible, the Psalms for example, express the human feelings and ideas of the writer? And we know that the historical writers, both of the Old and New Testaments, made use of ordinary human documents and records. So St. Luke expressly tells us in the Prologue to his Gospel, and the author of II Maccabees informs us that he derived his material from Jason of Cyrene, whose five books of history he condensed.

To set forth this difficulty more clearly, we

may note the distinction between Revelation and Inspiration.

Revelation. — Revelation means that God communicates truth or knowledge to a created intellect in a supernatural way. The truth thus communicated need not necessarily be a mystery of the supernatural order. It might be a truth of the natural order, such as the doctrine of Free Will, or the Immortality of the Soul, which we may discover by our own investigation by the light of natural reason. But when God reveals it, we then have a further and a higher motive for assenting to its truth — *viz.*, the authority of God Himself.

Now, if God wants a book written He might simply illuminate the writer's mind with new revelations and order him to write them down as His message to the world; as happened in the case of the Prophets of the Old Testament and St. John when penning the Apocalypse.

But in many other cases we have no reason for asserting or supposing any special revelation. For example, St. Luke tells us that he consulted all the documents and witnesses available for the compilation of his Gospel. How, then, can God be the author of that Gospel, since the selection of events, the arranging of material, the whole method of production, seem to proceed from Luke the Physician?

Process of Inspiration. — Let us take as a concrete example the story of the Burning Bush, narrated in the Book of Exodus, which book I assume to have been written by Moses, the eye-witness of the scene. The process of inspiration may be conceived thus: —

First, God impels Moses to write a description of the scene, just as I might urge you to write an account of some event you had personally witnessed.

Secondly, Moses proceeds to write his account, using his own personal knowledge of what happened. But in the process, God, by His almighty power, is so illuminating and directing the intellect, imagination and will of Moses that only those ideas are by him clearly perceived, accepted and written down which God wishes to have in the book. Moses acts freely (and, perhaps, may be quite unconscious that he is being specially directed); still, his selection is influenced by God in such a way that the resulting description is from God. It is written in the style and method of Moses, it bears the stamp of his human character, it expresses his personal views; and yet it also proceeds from the Divine Mind, which is working through the mind of Moses to set forth the ideas and images which God wants to have placed on record.

Illustration. — We may, perhaps, illustrate it from the selective use we ourselves make of lan-

guage to express our ideas. When you wish to speak and convey your views to others, you don't start off by coining new words and phrases, new images and metaphors. The whole system of social intercourse by language supposes a prearranged, conventional code of signals familiar to those we are addressing. The process of speaking or writing is simply a selective one. Each one picks out from the vast arsenal of his native tongue the words which correspond to his ideas, arranges them as best he may, and gives them to the world.

Why may not God also exercise this selective power? He uses a *living* mind as His instrument, selects from that mind's store of knowledge the ideas that suit His purpose, secures that these ideas be written down accurately, and thus uses not merely human words, but human ideas, as the alphabet of His inscrutable thoughts.

False Theories of Inspiration. — The explanation just given of the Catholic idea of Inspiration shows how far removed is the Catholic Doctrine from the loose notions of Inspiration held so commonly outside the Catholic Church. Many non-Catholics, when they talk of the inspired writing of the Bible, use the term in the same sense as when they talk of the inspiration of Shakespeare or Shelley; it merely denotes that quality of literature which results from and is evidence of poetic exalta-

tion, deep insight into the beauty of nature, æsthetic sensitiveness, and so on. So that "Macbeth," or "The Skylark," or "The Hound of Heaven" rank with the Gospels as inspired writings. Such loose notions the Catholic Church resolutely rejects. For her the true notion of Biblical Inspiration is crystallized in that short sentence which has been canonized by the Councils of Trent and the Vatican: God is the Author of the Scriptures.

Proof of Inspiration. — Having thus dealt with the meaning and nature of Biblical Inspiration, we may next consider the question: How can we know for certain that a book or document is inspired? On what evidence does the Inspiration of the Bible rest? Here we are face to face with an all-important and fundamental question which has never, to my mind, been fairly met or dealt with, except in the Catholic Church alone. The Church gives to that question a full, and I think a completely satisfactory, answer. Religious bodies outside the Catholic Church, which accept the Bible as God's Word, have offered various other solutions, and all are quite unsatisfactory. Now, the Catholic answer to the question, How do we know the Bible is inspired? is this: We know the Bible is inspired because the permanent living organ or teacher of Truth, namely, the Church, assures us that it is so. Try to grasp firmly the fact that the Church has

been established by Christ, and is now actually functioning as a living, teaching organization, specially set up to safeguard and promulgate religious truth. Just as a university is an organization for the collecting and distributing of literary and scientific knowledge, just as a historical or archæological society exists to gather and impart facts about the past, so the Church (regarded as the *Ecclesia docens*) is a permanent Board of Teachers with a divinely appointed Head, supernaturally assisted to discharge its duties properly. Grasp this fact, I say, and at once you see why the Church's authoritative declaration that the Bible is inspired by God at once settles the matter, satisfies the mind and excludes all reasonable doubt.

The Only Adequate Answer. — For the question as to whether a book is inspired by God or not is surely one that cannot be determined either by internal evidence or by the mere statement of the human writer himself that he is inspired. For we have seen that the ideas and language of the inspired book may seem to proceed entirely from the human author (though God is exerting His selective influence) and need not have anything peculiarly distinctive of their divine origin. Again, in the case of bald statements of facts, such as genealogies, lists of kings, description of rites and ceremonies, like those in the Book of Leviticus, who would ven-

ture to say that such passages could, from internal evidence, be shown to be inspired? And, secondly, the mere statement of a writer that he believes that he is inspired is evidently inadequate. For unless you assume the very point at issue, you must suppose him capable of error; we know that thousands of people have laid claim to Divine Inspiration without there being sufficient grounds to justify the claim. Every religious teacher, from Mohammed, the Prophet of the Koran, to Joseph Smith, the Prophet of Mormonism, has set up in the teaching line on the ground of being divinely inspired. All these various claimants, who teach such totally contradictory, and in many cases absurd, doctrines, may all of them be wrong, but most certainly cannot all of them be right.

The Only Proof. — The only satisfactory proof that a book is inspired by God is if God Himself says it is so and if we have clear evidence of this. In other words, God must reveal the fact. And the Church declares that this revelation about the inspired character of the Bible is a part of the primitive deposit of doctrine confined to her care in Apostolic times, to be guarded and transmitted without loss, and communicated to mankind all down the ages.

The special guarantee which secures the Church against making mistakes in expounding and inter-

preting this body of doctrine is called the gift of Infallibility. Consequently, the logical process whereby a Catholic reaches certitude about the inspiration of the Bible is the same as that whereby he reaches certitude about the Real Presence, about the efficacy of the Sacraments, the dogma of the Trinity, or any other Catholic doctrine. He assures himself by *reason* and *investigation* that the Catholic Church is the duly authorized custodian and teacher of Divine Truth in the world, and that God Himself guarantees the faithful discharge of this teaching function, so that she will make no mistakes on points of truth or morality. She will never, *e.g.*, teach that the Virgin Birth or the Resurrection are myths, or that divorce or race suicide can be moral. And once he learns that the Church has defined that the Bible is inspired, he accepts the decision unhesitatingly and is at rest on the matter.

Possibly the objection may be raised that in offering this solution we are involving ourselves in a vicious circle — proving A by B, and B by A. As if John Smith were to write a letter of recommendation about himself, stating that he, John Smith, is a truthful, honest, trustworthy man. Such a letter gives John Smith a good character, but then, on what does it rest? Its validity depends on the trustworthiness of John Smith himself. His au-

thority supports the letter, and the letter is the guarantee for his trustworthiness.

Now, in like manner, I, as a Catholic, believe the Bible is inspired because the Infallible Church says so; but then, I accept the Church as infallible because the Bible says so! This looks like a vicious circle. I prove the Church from the Bible, and the Bible from the Church. To show there is no vicious circle it is only necessary to distinguish two aspects of the Bible record.

You can treat the books of the Bible (let us take the Gospels) as ordinary human historical literature, and use them as a source of historical truth like any other trustworthy document. From the evidence of those books thus critically studied we learn the facts of Christ's life, His teaching, the founding of the Church, and His promises to that Church. In using the Bible thus we are treating the documents as human productions, and there is no question of divine faith as yet, but of the ordinary, natural exercise of the intellect, and the critical faculty of investigation.

To prove the existence of the Church — to learn what her charter is — we appeal to reason. We try to get down to the bedrock of historical facts. Let others be satisfied to accept their ideal of what Christ's Church ought to be like from the day-dreams of a man like Martin Luther or Henry VIII.

We Catholics like to go back and find out exactly what it is that *Christ wanted* His Church to be. And surely this is sane, sound common sense.

But now, having thus historically proved the existence and nature of the Church, having convinced yourself that the Church was really intended by her Founder to function as an unerring teacher of revealed truth, you then turn to that teaching authority and ask her about the Gospels. She tells you that these Gospels, besides being historically trustworthy narratives, are inspired by God — which gives them a new value in your eyes, and makes them a mine of spiritual knowledge and refreshment for your soul. Here there is no vicious circle. From the Gospel, regarded as an ordinary historical record, I prove the existence of the Church and her right to teach divine truth. And from this Church thus historically guaranteed I learn that the Gospels have all the richness and fecundity that result from their being divinely inspired.

Non-Catholic Views. — Now, when we turn to other so-called Christian bodies outside the Catholic Church, and ask what their proofs or arguments are for the Inspiration of the Bible, the first thing that strikes us is that, whatever those arguments may be like, they cannot be very efficacious or convincing, since, as a matter of fact, they have not

succeeded in keeping alive in those bodies a true belief in the Inspiration of the Bible.

Some years ago a prominent English literary man made the suggestion that a supplementary chapter or book should be written and incorporated with the Bible as a part of the inspired Volume, in order to bring it up to date; much as the " Encyclopædia Britannica " publishes extra volumes now and then to keep the work abreast of modern discoveries.

I presume that a part of the plan would be that the King and Parliament of England would be asked duly and authoritatively to proclaim the new chapter as of equal value with the original parts, and order it to be read in the churches. Not only did this estimable gentleman propose this modern addition to the Bible, but he himself would be ready, I think, on very little provocation, to undertake the task himself. Surely the mere bald fact that a prominent literary man of modern times could dream of making such a suggestion is an indication of utter deadness of faith in the Divine Inspiration of the Bible.

Shifting of Protestant View. — Perhaps the simplest way to convince oneself of the inadequacy of Protestant doctrines about the Inspiration of the Bible is to study the extraordinary change of opinion that has come about in the last four centuries.

The first Reformers started off with a kind of idolatry of the Bible. They never stopped to ask what reason they had for regarding the Bible as the Word of God, but in a blind, fanatical way set up this book as the supreme, and only Arbiter and Court of Appeal in matters of religion. They were delighted to find at hand a ready-made authority to which they could appeal against the authority of the Pope and the Catholic Church. They did not reflect that by rejecting the Church they were cutting through the branch on which they themselves sat; since it was the Church that had given them the Bible, and taught them that it was God's Word. Still, it was a clever move to appeal to the Bible, since no Catholic could or would call in question the authority of Scripture; the Catholic Church always turned to the Bible as the Charter of her privileges.

These Reformers refused to do homage to the living voice of Pope or Council, but fell down and worshipped the written word of the Bible. And their reverence and adoration went so far that the very words and letters of the Bible were declared to be divinely inspired, nay, even the vowel points of the Hebrew Text (which everyone knows were added by the Massoretic Scholars centuries after Christ), and this extreme view was actually imposed under pain of fine, imprisonment

and exile by the Confession of the Swiss Church in 1675.[2]

Modernists. — At the opposite extreme are the Protestant Modernists, who have not only ceased to regard the Bible as inspired by God, but consider that the Bible cannot be treated as in any true or scientific sense an historical record. Its contents are merely facts as " faith " regards them, faith, according to Modernists, being a special intuitive sense distinct from the intellect. Thus, as a Christian believer I may assert that Christ rose from the dead, though as a philosopher or scientist I cannot admit such an event as historical. The Bible is a compilation written from this " faith " viewpoint, and this it is that constitutes Inspiration.

Between these two extremes of unreasoning, worship on the one hand, and complete denial of its divine origin on the other, one can find every shade and variety of opinion amongst non-Catholics. Amongst those who did maintain Biblical Inspiration in a true sense, a theory much in vogue to prove its Inspiration was this: The divine origin and authorship are recognized by the internal experience of light and sweetness and comfort which accompany or result from the reading of Holy Scripture. The Holy Ghost Himself thus testifies in our hearts that the words we read are from Him.

[2] " Catholic Encyclopædia," " Inspiration," Vol. VIII., p. 48.

Now, whilst we admit that the nature of the doctrine taught in Scripture and the effects it produces in our souls are confirmatory proofs of its divine origin, just as the style, eloquence or elevation of a written speech may be confirmatory evidence of its being by a certain author, still we deny that this subjective criticism can be a satisfactory one of general application.

For, in the first place, many people never experience those feelings or emotions at all when reading the Bible. Is it, then, not inspired for them?

Secondly, such subjective sensations and impressions are evidently liable to illusion, as sad experience has proved. Surely, if God has sent us documents to be read and utilized as coming directly from Himself, He must have provided some definite, clear, easily applied method of establishing for all the fact of the divine authorship, seeing that the whole force and value for us of those documents depends on this authorship. There are many human writings whose value and authority depend on the identity of the writer being clear beyond dispute, as, for example, a will, a cheque, or a letter. If you get a cheque drawn in your favor for $10,000, you will scrutinize the signature carefully, since it makes a considerable difference whose name is at the foot of the cheque. The authority of the cheque depends on its authorship

being clear beyond dispute. So the value of a letter from a friend depends on your being certain that it was really your friend who wrote it.

God's Letter to Us. — St. Augustine calls Holy Scripture the letter which God has written to us for our instruction and comfort; and clearly the authorship of this divine letter must be established beyond a doubt if the letter is to produce its effects. When a king or emperor sends a despatch to one of his subjects he sends a trustworthy courier to deliver the missive and guarantee its royal origin. Thus also (according to Catholic teachers) did the Heavenly King act when sending His letter to us. He sent His ambassadors to testify to its genuineness; and the most important of these witnesses was His own Son, Jesus Christ; and after Him those other specially appointed mouthpieces of His wisdom whom we call Apostles.

It is from Jesus Christ and from His Apostles that the Church received definite assurance of the divine origin of the Bible, and this message has been faithfully handed on to us by His duly accredited Messenger, the never-dying Church.

Effects of Inspiration. — It remains now to say something about the effects of Inspiration on the written documents produced under its influence.

This subject is a wide one, and we can deal with only one or two aspects of it. The question that is

of chief consequence, and that is most widely discussed, is this: Does Divine Inspiration guarantee the truth of every statement in the Bible? Are there not errors at least in matters of history and science? And, if so, how can we reconcile them with the statement that God is its Author?

Catholic Principles. — In this matter I will try to explain the Catholic doctrine, and indicate certain general principles that have to be applied to meet difficulties like the above.

The fundamental Catholic position may be stated in two propositions: —

1. The whole Bible is inspired — that is, all the books and every part of them. This statement was opposed by those who maintained that only matters of faith or morals fell under Inspiration, and that all purely scientific or historical matters were given simply on the human authority of the writer. Such people apply to Biblical Inspiration principles which are true when applied to the prerogative of Infallibility in the teaching Church. The Pope is infallible only in matters pertaining to faith and morals. But the Catholic Church has decisively declared that this doctrine cannot be thus applied to Scripture.

2. The second principle is that, as a result of Inspiration, everything in the Bible is true; we cannot admit formal error as having been com-

municated to the world on God's authority. This second statement needs fuller elucidation.

No Errors in Bible. — Now, in the first place, in making this statement we do not mean to exclude the possibility of errors creeping into the copies of the Bible that have been made from the original or autograph. It is evident to any student of the Bible Text that while we are more certain of the substantial integrity of the Biblical Text than of that of any other ancient book, still minor errors have from time to time occurred in the MSS., as, *e.g.*, in numerals, names or dates, and such like. The Hebrew letters (which stand for numerals) are easily confounded, and through misreading a single letter quite a large error in computing years may occur. God has handed over the Bible (just as He has handed over the Blessed Sacrament) to be guarded and preserved by mankind, and it is man's duty to exercise all diligence to secure the text of the documents.

In the second place, we must remember that God is using men and human language as His instruments to convey His thoughts to us. Now, every artist is conditioned by the material he works in. Michelangelo had to use as best he might the blocks of marble at his disposal; even the great violinist Paganini was dependent on the quality of his instrument for the production of his marvel-

lous music. So the Divine Artist also is dependent on the material He works in; and if God wishes to employ human literature, produced by human writers, as a means of communicating with us, then He must use it as He finds it, employing the various forms and modes of speech in use amongst men — such as metaphor, parable, story, fable, drama, as well as historical composition, proverbs, poetry, and so on. And to know what exactly is the truth which God intends to convey we must take into account the particular form of speech or writing which is employed.

Parables. — A favorite method of teaching truth employed by Our Lord was one which is familiar to all Eastern peoples — *viz.*, that of parables or stories with a moral.

In the New Testament we have no less than thirty-six distinct parables used by Our Lord. He used them to convey truth, and we have His own divine authority for the truths they convey. In the parable of the Prodigal Son, *e.g.*, He enshrines for us in immortal language the overwhelming truth of God's infinite mercy to the repentant sinner. In the story of the merchant seeking pearls, we learn the supreme importance of the human soul and its salvation.

The parable is a medium for conveying glorious truth, and yet need not itself be historically true.

When Jesus tells us of the man with two sons, one of whom left his father to see the world, we are not bound to take this as literally true, or to think that the merchant seeking pearls represents an actual individual merchant. It is not historical truth that is taught, but moral truth under an allegory.

So again, when in the Book of Judges Jonathan told the men of Sichem the story of the trees that wanted a king and applied in turn to the Olive tree, the Fig tree, the Vine, and the Bramble, evidently we are not expected to believe that the trees actually spoke, or tried to set up a monarchical form of government; and yet the story conveyed a very pointed truth.

Drama. — Drama, or lyric poetry, can be made the vehicle of very exalted teaching, although the persons and incidents introduced in such poems may be entirely fictitious. It is quite immaterial to the sublime lessons conveyed by " The Merchant of Venice," " Hamlet," or " Othello " whether such persons as Shylock, or the Prince of Denmark, or the Moor of Venice ever actually existed. There are portions of Scripture, such as the Book of Job and some of the Psalms, which are set forth in dramatical form, and it matters not in the least whether various characters there described ever actually existed or not; it is the magnificent truths

about God and His providence so gloriously taught that really matter.

Consequently, when we say that all Scripture is true, we do not mean to say that every part of Scripture is true in the same way. We have to examine carefully the particular form of literary expression that is being employed before we can judge whether it is historic, moral, or didactic truth that is being taught.

Are There Historical Errors? — But special difficulties are frequently raised about the parts of the Bible that are confessedly written as historical records, such as Genesis and the Pentateuch generally, the Book of Kings, the Four Gospels, the Acts of the Apostles. About the historical accuracy and trustworthiness of these books a mighty battle has been waged in recent times. The rationalistic opponents of the Bible have striven might and main to convict the sacred writings of error, trying to show that statements made in the Bible conflict with the trustworthy testimony of secular records.

Now, to examine this subject in much detail is evidently quite impossible in a short space. But we can make some general observations to guide our enquiries.

A great many of the charges of inaccuracy or error made against the Bible arise from the prejudice and blindness of hostile critics. They are

anxious to pick holes in the record; and a very slight acquaintance with the law courts — or, indeed, with everyday life — is enough to show how easy it is to find faults and grounds of accusation when one is looking for them.

Modern Discoveries. — To begin with, an extraordinary flood of light has been thrown on the historical part of the Bible (Old and New Testament) by the discoveries made during the past fifty or sixty years. Through excavations and researches in Bible lands, monuments have been unearthed, long-forgotten languages have been deciphered, buried civilizations have been brought to light. In Assyria, Babylonia, Persia, in Palestine itself, and especially in Egypt, marvellous and undreamt-of treasures have been recovered. Now, what is the general result of all these discoveries? Have they tended to discredit the Bible or prove its record to be in error?

The answer is, emphatically NO. On the contrary, the discoveries have tended in a marvellous manner to substantiate the truth, even in minute details, of the Bible narrative.

To no part of the Bible has criticism directed its efforts more assiduously than the New Testament. And in spite of a century and a half of untiring investigation, not a single historical error has ever been proved in the New Testament. I make this

assertion advisedly, because in books of hostile criticism of the Bible, you will see the opposite statement boldly made. There are, of course, historical difficulties which we cannot solve for want of fuller information, since the period of history covered by the New Testament is singularly deficient in contemporary writers. But what I want to emphasize is this, that we must beware of bold statements about errors in the Bible which are constantly found in books written by rationalistic or atheistic writers — many of them very superficial scholars.

An Example. — One or two examples may make the point clear. In the second chapter of St. Luke we learn that Mary and Joseph journeyed from Nazareth to Bethlehem as the result of a decree of the Emperor Augustus, commanding a census to be taken of the whole Roman Empire, and Joseph had to go to Bethlehem to be enrolled in his native town, since he was of the race of David. Moreover, this enrolment took place when a certain Quirinius was Governor of Syria. Here are three definite statements of fact — and the higher critics have challenged them as erroneous: (1) A world-wide census ordered by the Emperor Augustus (2) took place in Judea when Quirinius ruled Syria, and (3) people were obliged to travel to the city whence their family was sprung to be enrolled.

Half a century ago all the rationalistic critics declared dogmatically that there is no evidence of any such decree by the Emperor Augustus; Quirinius was Governor of Syria ten years later than the birth of Christ; and the idea of people being obliged to return to their native town for enrolment is a pure invention; such a custom was unknown. Consequently, the Gospel is in error.

Thus the critics in their wisdom. And, of course, many people who read these dogmatic assertions made by learned professors were duly impressed and wondered whether the Bible was all it claimed to be.

A Catholic is usually not much affected by these criticisms, because he has the Church behind him, and has her guarantee to fall back on. But the non-Catholic is completely at the mercy of the critic; if he is unable himself to deal with the difficulty, he is in a pretty helpless state.

The Tables Turned. — Now, notice what happened. A few years ago men began to unearth in Egypt and decipher a vast quantity of papyri documents, some of them of great antiquity; and at Oxyrhynchus, on the Nile, they found certain papyri records which proved to be Greek documents going back to the first century of our era. Now, some of these were actually the census returns sent in by householders along the Nile on

the occasion of the census held in that land at regular intervals of fourteen years. And Professor Ramsay has shown that it is almost certain that this system of census-taking was ordered by Augustus not only in Egypt, but in the other provinces — in fact, all over the Empire.

From these papyri and other documents, it is now clearly established that St. Luke's account is entirely accurate. Augustus did order the census; Quirinius was twice Governor of Syria, and it was during his earlier period that the census of St. Luke was taken. And the custom of obliging people to travel to their native town for enrolment was actually in force.

Higher Critics' Tactics. — In connection with this last point, let me give you an amusing instance of the skilful way our higher critics argue when dealing with the Bible, and how they change their tactics when confronted with awkward facts. Up to recent times (as I have said) the critics declared that St. Luke was in error in stating that people were obliged to repair to their family city for enrolment. But research has now made it clear that St. Luke's statement was quite correct and that the critics were wrong.

Now, what does your critic do? Does he beg St. Luke's pardon and apologize for charging him with mendacity? Not a bit of it. A certain Ger-

man professor, commenting on the Oxyrhynchus papyri, thus deals with the matter: "We now know from historical evidence that families *were* obliged to journey to their native town for enrolment. Luke mentions this in the case of Mary and Joseph, evidently because he wanted, by using this historical detail, to give an air of reality and historical accuracy to his otherwise romantic and fanciful story of the birth at Bethlehem."

Now, what are you to say to a man like that? If St. Luke gives details not found in other authorities, he is accused of inventing them. If he gives details which other authorities show to be accurate, he is accused of inserting them to deceive the public and secure credit for the other details which he invented. So that in any case you can't trust him. Poor St. Luke!

Conclusion. — In conclusion, I offer this advice: —

1. Don't trust the rationalistic higher critics! If they are particularly emphatic in asserting some point which is damaging to the authority of the Bible, you may usually take it for granted they are wrong! This I say deliberately as the result of many years' familiarity with their books, their ways, and their methods.

2. When you come across historical or other difficulties in the Bible, consult the best books and

authorities on the subject. A large number of splendid books dealing with the Bible have been published in recent years, some in English, many of them in other languages; for practical purposes I would recommend the " Catholic Encyclopædia." For instance, the article on Inspiration in the eighth volume is well worth careful study; and it gives a fine list of books for further consultation. If you cannot consult books, ask a priest or some Catholic student of the Bible for information.

3. Finally, try to realize that in the Bible the world possesses a treasure of priceless value. According to the Catholic doctrine of Inspiration, this Book is resplendent with a light that is the light of God Himself, shining amidst the darkness of time to guide men across the tossing waters of life to the port of salvation.

And every Catholic will feel that, as a member of the Church, to whose safe-keeping the Bible has been entrusted, he must share the responsibility of defending it. That high duty and responsibility he will regard as one of the greatest privileges which membership of the Church confers upon him.

Chapter Four

CATHOLICISM IN DEADLY OPPOSITION TO UNBELIEF

One of the facts about the Catholic Church which must strike every observer, and especially students of her history, is the intense hostility to her system, her teachings and methods, that has existed all down the ages, and especially in more recent times. Since the wave of scepticism which began to sweep over the world about four hundred years ago infected men's minds, and a system of so-called Rationalism began to assert itself strongly and to strike deep roots in the intellectual world, a certain section of mankind has been engaged in a fierce and deadly struggle with that method of thought or attitude towards the problems of life which we call Catholicism.

Hostility to the Church. — Catholicism (or the Catholic religion) includes three things — a system of philosophy, a code of morality, and a method of worship; to all of which the modern infidel mind is intensely hostile. In fact, we can hardly conceive two modes of thought more diametrically opposed than that of the Freethinker and Catholi-

cism. The one shakes off all shackles and boasts that he is free to think as he pleases on all the fundamental problems of the universe — such as the existence and attributes of God, free will, life after death, the meaning of sin, the question of a divine Revelation. The Catholic considers that on all these great problems he has found a solution which commands the assent of his intellect so fully that he is just as much at rest with regard to them as he is with regard to the doctrine of the solar system or the circulation of the blood.

The so-called Freethinker refuses to recognize any binding or constraining force in tradition or the mere authority of others. His attitude is: "I want to see and examine for myself. I accept nothing which I cannot myself verify." Now, such a man is bitterly opposed to the Catholic Church because he conceives of a Roman Catholic as one who accepts all his religious doctrines on the authority of others; who believes a thing because he is told to believe; and is either forbidden to examine the foundations of his belief or is afraid to do so.

Your Freethinker, if he is virulent (and he often is), will conceive and express a very extraordinary idea of the state of poor benighted Roman Catholics. According to him, they are a set of unfortunate and deluded folk who are groaning under an

intolerable intellectual despotism, which has its headquarters in Rome, and its chief mouthpiece and exponent in the Pope. This intellectual tyranny — which holds so large a part of mankind in its grasp — is extraordinarily powerful in its organization. Through some strange sorcery it numbers amongst its devoted adherents many of the brightest intellects and most irreproachable characters in the history of the world — poets like Dante and Francis Thompson, philosophers like Thomas Aquinas, Descartes, Pascal, scientists in endless array from Roger Bacon to Mendel and Pasteur, statesmen of the type of Sir Thomas More, generals and educated men of every class and rank and position in life. Now, according to the Freethinkers, all this vast array of human intellects and a whole fifth of the world's population are the victims of a blind infatuation which has no parallel in the history of the world.

In order to make good their position they set to work to show in detail the untenable nature of Catholic doctrines, and so we get the endless array of infidel publications which flood the market nowadays.

Cause of this Hostility. — We gaze at this fierce battle between infidelity and Catholicism, and ask ourselves: "What is the meaning of these incessant attacks on the Catholic Church? Why are

so many men hostile to Catholicism? There must be some deep reason for this antagonism."

Now, amongst the reasons which may be assigned, one certainly is this: That it is supposed that the accepting of the Catholic faith means the enslavement or fettering of the intellect. You give up your intellectual freedom once you submit to the yoke of the Catholic religion. That, of course, would be an intolerable sacrifice to make, and the system that imposes it is regarded as simply a bad and debasing system, which cannot be too strongly denounced. Tyranny and despotism men have always hated. The love of liberty is one of the noblest instincts implanted in the human heart, and the finest deeds that light up the pages of history have been done in defence of Liberty. No sacrifice has been thought too great to shake off the yoke of a usurping tyrant.

Intellectual Despotism. — But if despotism in civil or domestic life is intolerable, how much more terrible will that despotism be that seeks to enchain the intellect: which attacks the very root of all our liberty, the liberty of the soul to seek and find the truth!

"Stone walls do not a prison make,
Nor iron bars a cage,"

provided a man be free in his soul. But suppose a person seeks to enslave my very soul, would creep

into my bosom and set up his throne there, suppose he tries to dominate the very thoughts of my heart and the promptings of my conscience; how shall we regard such an attempt? Well, this is just what the Catholic Church is charged with doing. She enslaves not the body, but the souls of men; she fetters their intellects; she dictates to them not only what to do or avoid externally, but what to think and what to believe in the secret recesses of the soul.

What Is Freedom? — Now, it is wise in matters of this kind to look to your definitions; we may therefore stop to ask ourselves the question: What is the true meaning of the expression *Liberty of thought?*

Freedom in general means that one can exercise some faculty or power without hindrance or obstacle that might impede such exercise. *E.g.:* You are free to leave your house if the doors are open and there is no one to bar your exit. But if you are locked up in jail, you will not have this liberty, because obstacles of a serious kind hinder the exercise of your power of locomotion.

Freedom of thought in the widest sense means that you can think as you please, or hold any views you like, on any subject whatsoever without let or hindrance. It is clear that the only hindrances of which there is question here will be in the moral

order, since we suppose that the mind is physically healthy and fit for action.

What Checks Liberty of Thought? — Now, what are the hindrances that might conceivably limit or check or circumscribe this liberty to think as you please? There are, I think, only two. They are: —

1. In the first place, Truth. Once you know the facts of any particular subject, you can think about that subject only in one way — you can't hold any view you like about it. *E.g.:* If I ask you whether it is night or day, you cannot have two opinions on the subject — your freedom to think as you please is limited by the fact that you know which it is.

2. The second influence which may tend to limit freedom of thought is passion or emotion: fear, hope, love, despair, or some other movement of the soul that can blind the intellect or sway it to assent to something as true for which it has not sufficient evidence.

With regard to the first point, the grasping of truth evidently hinders the mind from indulging in any view it pleases and forming opinions at random. And this fact I would like to insist upon, since I regard it as the key or solution to most of the charges of fettering the intellect which are so freely hurled against Catholicism. I repeat then:

On a subject of which you know nothing you can form any views you please (which is, I suppose, the reason why people are so voluble on matters of which they are really ignorant). But once you know the facts, then you are free to think only in *one* way — the truth has put a stop to the swaying of the mind, just as the presence of iron holds the magnetized needle fixed in a definite direction.

There are endless topics on which we can speculate at our own sweet will. Is the planet Mars inhabited? Nobody knows, and so you can say yes or no, just as you like. Before Bass Strait was explored nobody knew whether Tasmania was a part of the Australian continent or not; there was complete freedom of thought on the subject. Once Bass and Flinders had achieved their daring exploit and sailed through the Strait, such freedom of speculation ceased. Pardon me for multiplying examples on a matter that seems obvious — but it is important to insist upon this point.

Rational Liberty Involves Restraint. — Now, I ask, what sane man objects to having his liberty of thought checked or limited by discovering the truth? And it is thus, and thus only, that Catholicism sets limits to one's freedom of thought — *viz.*, by telling you the truth on certain matters of great importance about yourself, your soul, its nature and destiny.

Liberty is not licence. Rational liberty, of its very nature, demands or supposes the setting of limits. Political liberty, for example, consists in checking the freedom of action of particular individuals in order to secure the greater liberty of the general body of citizens. Your liberty to walk the streets of a city, without danger of being robbed or murdered, presupposes that the liberty of action of thieves and cut-throats is held in check by salutary fear of the police. A man that is a victim to some passion or vice (*e.g.*, the vice of drink) is no longer free — he is a slave to this passion. To enjoy true liberty of soul, his desire to drink as much as he pleases must be held in check. His freedom in one direction must be limited to secure the higher liberty of the soul.

So it is with freedom of thought. True liberty of thought does not mean unhindered scope of speculation; but it means such a respect for and submission to the truth as will secure to the intellect the fullest use of its powers to contemplate truth already attained, and investigate truth more fully where still undiscovered.

The Freethinker is carried away by a passion for speculation, and just like other passions (drink or sensuality), this passion, too, blinds the mind and hinders it in the search after truth.

A Triple Influence. — But we said above that

other influences also may hinder liberty of thought — *viz.*, emotions such as fear, hatred, and love. We may enumerate here three tendencies of man's nature which have actually in the past often clouded the human intellect and hindered the pursuit of truth, *viz.*, superstition, prejudice and undue reverence for the authority of a great name.

In the first place, *superstition,* which is a blind, unreasoning fear of, or reverence for, unknown forces, has caused men to shrink from investigating or discovering truth, through dread of evil consequences. Thus, pagan idolatry blinded men's minds for ages, owing to their superstitious dread of incurring unknown disasters by refusing worship to senseless idols.

Prejudice or an excessive love or partiality for a person, an institution, a theory or an idea, may also hinder the mind from attaining the truth. We shrink from accepting conclusions that run counter to the affection of the soul; and so we turn away from, and refuse to listen to, arguments that might bring home the unwelcome truth to us.

Force of Authority. — In the third place, we may enumerate as an influence that sways the mind in the search after truth — undue regard for authority. It is well known how powerful an influence is exercised in the world of thought by a great name. We are all by instinct hero-

worshippers. Men love to follow a leader, and once a man's reputation is established (whether deservedly or undeservedly) then his influence in forming the opinions of the multitudes may be almost incalculable.

One has but to instance men like Francis Bacon, Pascal, Kant, Darwin, Goethe. These and hundreds of others are looked upon as "Leaders of Thought," and because the majority of men find it easier to accept ready-made conclusions than to think for themselves, this magic influence exercised by a great name tends to hinder liberty of thought.

Fashion holds sway in the intellectual thoroughfares of the world no less than on the streets of our cities; it dictates the shape of men's opinions no less than the cut of their clothes.

Need I illustrate this matter further? In politics, for example, how few men think for themselves? One man does the thinking for his party, the rest follow like sheep. Or take philosophy; it is hardly an exaggeration to say that philosophy as a science for the discovery of truth has almost ceased to exist at many of our modern universities. It is little more than a record of the opinions of past thinkers, arranged more or less methodically, classified and criticized. As for any genuine effort to grapple with the problems that lie at the base of our existence, there is little or none. It is much

the same in literature, art, history, social science. Everywhere the authority of a few sways and moulds the minds of the many.

Is the Church Guilty? — We have now described some of the influences which may tend to hinder the mind in its pursuit of truth; and our purpose is to examine whether those influences are at work in the case of Catholicism. That is, we want to find out if the charge made against Catholicism, that it tends to fetter or enslave the intellect and destroy freedom of thought, can be traced to any of those causes which I have enumerated. We will enquire, then, in the first place: Does Catholicism encourage superstition and thereby hinder the white light of truth from reaching the minds of her children?

In the second place, is the Church's influence baleful and crippling because of the prejudice in her favor, the blind infatuation or loyalty or fanaticism which she manages to inspire into her children?

Or, in the third place, does she lay undue stress on her own authority, insisting on her subjects accepting the doctrines she teaches without murmur or comment?

Now, you all know well that our enemies constantly ascribe the blighting influence of the Church of Rome (as they call it) to just those

three things. They say she encourages superstition, which darkens the mind; fanaticism, which renders men deaf to reason; and she insists on servile submission to her authority, which paralyzes initiative and the spirit of enquiry.

The First Charge. — And first, with regard to the charge of *superstition.* If you ask in what way Catholics are superstitious, you get the answer: By believing in the efficacy of the Sacraments, by assisting at Mass, by accepting the doctrine of the Real Presence, and bowing down in reverence before the Blessed Sacrament; or, again, by honoring the statues and images of the saints, by using holy water, and so on.

Now, let us consider this subject a little. Superstition, in a popular sense, means an unreasonable attributing of special power or influence to objects or events which in themselves are incapable of such influence. Examples of this are familiar to all.

Now, the first remark I make is this: Superstition cannot for long resist reason.

Once the light of learning and scientific research is brought to play upon superstition, it withers up as surely as the dew evaporates under the rays of the blazing sun. In order to test gold, men apply a mixture of strong acids which no inferior metal can resist. The fact that a metal remains un-

affected by the acid test is taken as conclusive that the metal is genuine gold and no mere imitation.

Now, I assert that the Catholic Church has stood this acid test of reason applied in every shape for century after century without showing signs of corrosion. Other Christian sects have succumbed to the corroding influence of Rationalism. It is not uncharitable, it is merely the simple truth, to assert that the sects outside the Catholic Church are moth-eaten with Modernism — *i.e.*, with views about religion which are subversive of all true belief in the supernatural. But in the Catholic Church loyalty to her doctrines — belief in the efficacy of her Sacraments, intense faith in the Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist, are just as strong to-day as they were a thousand years ago.

Facing the Difficulties. — Superstition can flourish only where ignorance prevails; men can cling to superstition only when they are blind to facts. But in no religious system have the difficulties been discussed and examined so thoroughly and systematically as in the Catholic Church. The men who are most responsible for the public advocacy of Catholicism are just the men who have studied most deeply the difficulties of the system — *viz.*, the priests of the Catholic Church. Do you know what a priest's training is like? After the usual school curriculum is completed, a student for

the priesthood must devote at least six years, sometimes seven or more, to a constant and laborious study of the whole system of thought on which Catholicism rests. And those years are years of strenuous study. And do not think it means cramming a student with ready-made formulæ or definitions. On the contrary, the system is peculiarly one of training by accurate and exhaustive discussion. I think I am safe in saying that no system has been so carefully elaborated for training men to think and examine and probe problems to the very core as the scholastic system followed in Catholic theological colleges all over the world.

So true is this that when our enemies want to get strong difficulties against the Catholic Church they often turn to her own theological manuals, and there they find long lists of difficulties which they calmly appropriate and serve to the public as newly discovered proofs of the badness of the Romish system. They forget to tell their listeners that St. Thomas and a host of other theologians have proposed, discussed and demolished those difficulties ages ago. I am inclined to think that those hostile to the Church, and those who accuse her of obscurantism, and imagine she wants to blind the intellect, would be surprised to see how freely and frankly every objection against religion

and against the Church is set forth, examined and criticized in the schools.

No Shirking of Facts. — There is no shirking of facts. Catholics do not want to live in a fool's paradise and find out in the end that they have been blinding themselves to the truth. We have nothing to gain by backing up a lie. And, personally, I may say that few things have strengthened my faith so much as reading books written against the Church of Rome. The attacks therein contained are often so futile that they help to show forth the strength of the Church's position which they are meant to demolish.

I repeat then, the Catholic Church does not shrink from the light: she welcomes the light, and seeks ever more and more to have her doctrines illuminated by close study and research, knowing well that deeper knowledge will only serve to increase love and reverence for her doctrines. Therefore, her system is not superstition.

Superstition cannot thrive in the sunshine of scientific investigation. But Catholicism has thriven most vigorously in men whose souls were steeped in the splendor of the light of science and knowledge.

Was it superstition, think you, that made the greatest General of modern times, Marshal Foch, kneel before the Blessed Sacrament and worship

Christ really present in the Eucharist, every morning before he went forth to lead the armies of the Allies to splendid victory? Was it superstition that made Pasteur, the prince of modern scientists, ambition the faith of a Breton peasant? Was it superstition that caused Sir Thomas More, the learned Chancellor, to lay his head gaily on the block rather than deny the Pope's supremacy at the bidding of Henry VIII? Is it superstition that inspires millions of the world's brightest and best and most gifted intellects to submit to all the doctrines of the Catholic Church as the very truth of God revealed supernaturally to the world for its acceptance by an act of faith? Surely to call the religion of such men by the debasing name of superstition is a terrible abuse of language, and can only be the fruit of jealousy, blindness, or sectarianism.

Charge of Fanaticism. — The second influence which we referred to above as a possible hindrance to proper freedom of thought is prejudice and fanaticism. Are Catholics led on by some blind infatuation or devotion or affection to give up their power of thinking and follow the road of unreason?

This could only be (I take it) if the Church made her appeal to sentiment, or to the feelings and emotions, instead of to *reason.*

Now to anyone who knows Catholic theology, such a charge is incredibly foolish. The most strik-

ing characteristic of Catholic theology is the stern way it excludes feeling or sentiment, and applies pure intellect to the things of faith; weighing every doctrine in the balance of reason, and admitting only those doctrines which are clearly shown by Scripture or tradition to be part of Christ's Revelation. A striking example in confirmation of this is the vigorous and drastic way in which the Catholic Church rose up and threw off Modernism in the early part of this century.

Modernism. — Why did the Church reject Modernism? Just because Modernists tried to establish faith on some other foundation than reason. Modernists appealed to a certain special interior sense whereby we grasp the divine — a sort of instinct for God whereby the soul reaches out and apprehends Him, though not through the intellect. Once the soul has thus dimly come in contact with the divine, then the intellect endeavors to express this experience in its own language, and so you get dogmas, which are merely an effort to express in intellectual terms what is really inexpressible; like a blind man trying to talk about light or color, of which he has no genuine concept.

As she rejected Modernism in our own days and cast out many Modernists from her communion, so she has in past ages consistently rejected sentimentalism, pseudo-mysticism, and all forms of religious

teaching which appeal not to the intellect, but to the emotions.

Private Judgment. — But it is sometimes said that the Catholic Church kills " private judgment." That statement may mean either of two things. If it means that the Church knows very well that the individual is liable to err, and needs to have his conclusions checked and controlled by constant reference to the collective intellect of the Church, the statement is true. But then the same principle applies to all bodies of men clubbed together for the discovery of truth. The conclusions of the individual scientist, philosopher, investigator, must all be submitted to the collective wisdom of other kindred minds before those conclusions become current in the world's markets as genuine coin. That is, after all, the supreme safeguard of truth in all departments of human enquiry. It is one of the fine results of social intercourse and the incessant interchange of ideas which civilization renders possible, that the findings of the individual thinker are for ever being tested by the scrutiny of the student minds of the whole world.

But if, on the other hand, by private judgment you mean the right or privilege of each individual to examine and test for himself the argument for Catholicism as a whole, or the grounds for asserting that each individual doctrine is really a part of

the divine deposit of faith, then *no association in the world gives such freedom of private judgment as the Catholic Church.* And the reason is, the Catholic Church is not afraid of investigation; she welcomes the closest scrutiny of her doctrines and teachings; she is not afraid lest her house should topple down, because she knows it is founded on a rock.

Converts. — When enquirers come to us from outside, they are often astonished at the reception they get, especially if they have been educated on the staple diet that is administered in most Protestant households when dealing with the Catholic Church. For such enquirers are invariably told: "You must read, examine, investigate the claims of the Church for yourself, and then, if you feel convinced, we will see about receiving you." We do, of course, insist much on the importance and value of divine faith; but in the preliminary stages of enquiry, as to where the true Church is to be found, and in dealing with the historical questions connected with the origin and development of the Catholic Church, the enquirer must use his own reasoning powers, he has to think for himself — *i.e.*, he must use his own private judgment to decide about the claims of Catholicism.

Spiritualism. — There are, indeed, other bodies or sects which make an appeal that is not an ap-

peal to sound reason or judgment — *e.g.*, a spiritualistic séance does not appeal to reason; it appeals to the love of the occult and mysterious that is latent in every human heart; or to that hankering to get into touch with the dead which has in all ages led men to dabble in necromancy; or, finally, to the vulgar craving for novelty or for sensations and thrills which is responsible for so much of our modern displays in picture shows, theatres and music halls. Now, Catholicism makes no appeal to any of these things. It appeals to the Supreme Arbiter which sits as the final court of decision in all man's investigations into his own being and surroundings — namely, the *Human Reason.*

The Third Charge. — So far we have dealt with the charge of *Superstition* and *Fanaticism* as influences whereby Catholicism is supposed to fetter the intellect. Now let us take another ground of accusation. It is asserted often that the Catholic Church insists too strongly on the principle of authority in religion, imposing her doctrines authoritatively and dogmatically on her members and allowing no dissent from her teachings, and ruthlessly excommunicating anyone who dares to call in question any tenet which she regards as fundamental. Hence the charge against her of being intolerant, narrow-minded, exclusive, imperious.

Now, if there is one attitude more characteristic than another of the modern world, we might single out its tendency to defy or set aside authority, especially when authority seems to interfere with liberty or licence of speculation.

In certain departments men on the whole still recognize the function and the necessity of authority — *e.g.*, as the binding force that holds the social fabric together. Although even here there are daring speculators who would get rid of all authority and substitute anarchy for order in the civil state, and as a result of those anarchical theories the deference due to authority has been grievously weakened, both in the family, the school, and the State.

Authority. — But I am dealing now with authority in matters of the intellect as shaping, moulding, suggesting our views, beliefs, and convictions. Now, the charge made against the Catholic Church is that she has developed abnormally this principle of authority, with the result that her doctrinal system is a cast-iron one, which the believer must don like a set of armor of the Middle Ages; and that the effect of putting on this cumbersome intellectual outfit is that one's powers of thinking for oneself are as restrained and as awkward as were the movements of David when he tried to walk in the armor of Saul.

And we know that many thinking men are turned away from Catholicism by this way of viewing her system. A prominent journalist in London, writing about the conversion of Gilbert K. Chesterton, made the remark that he (the writer) could not dream of submitting to Catholicism because he respected his individual intellectual liberty too much, and would not place his conscience in the keeping of any man, either Pope or prelate!

Now, with regard to this position: In the first place, I think, a good deal of the force of the objection comes from the terms in which it is stated. To talk of a cast-iron system, fettering the intellect, and so on, has a rather alarming effect; it suggests being thrust against one's will into an intellectual dungeon, handcuffed and manacled, without liberty to breathe or think.

But truth, if it is really the truth, is, in a sense, a cast-iron thing which you can't twist and bend as you please. You have simply to accept it. But there is no more hardship in having to submit to the truth than in having to take your dinner because you are hungry, or going to sleep because you are tired. The mind needs its food, as the body does. No man in his senses kicks against the law that prescribes certain definite chemical combinations (called foodstuffs) as just those things, and only those, that the body must assimilate to

support its life. Truth is the foodstuff of the intellect, and without it the intellect will perish.

But, secondly, we admit that authority is a central principle in the Catholic system. Those that object to this really forget the place that authority holds in every educational system. The normal road to follow in acquiring knowledge is authority.

The Church a Witness. — But in the particular subject with which the Church has to deal — *viz.*, revealed truth, to be handed on from generation to generation, and thus preserved for mankind, the authority of the witness is of paramount importance. In pure science, although the authority of the teacher counts for much in the initial stages, still, when the student is proficient he can investigate for himself and make original discoveries of his own. But take *history*, for example, and see the part authority plays there. *All* historical knowledge depends on the reliability of the witnesses, who give us information about past ages or past transactions. If you refuse to accept the authority — *i.e.*, to believe the testimony of historical writers of the past, then history ceases to have any meaning for you. All our knowledge of all past human events depends on the evidence of the eye witnesses of those events who have confided their knowledge to writing, or handed it on by oral tradition.

Dogmatism of History. — Hence, it would be simply absurd to object to a lecturer on history: "Sir, you lay too much stress on authority; you want me to accept the evidence of dead people, of whom I know nothing; how can I trust them? I prefer to be a Freethinker, to have freedom of thought with regard to the past. I refuse to be shackled by your positive decrees. You insist on my believing — *e.g.*, that Julius Cæsar was killed by Brutus in B.C. 44, that William the Conqueror landed at Hastings in 1066, and so on. You are too authoritative, too positive, too dogmatic in your statements. You are fettering my intellect. I refuse to submit to your system."

Well, now, it is just as reasonable to object to the Church that she stresses her authority. What else can she do? Her claim to be the Church founded by Christ must be established and tested by historical methods. But once that claim is established she must insist upon her *authority*. For she is a witness, and claims to hold in her keeping Christ's message to mankind, and to have His authority to promulgate that message to the world from age to age.

Mark of a True Witness. — To those who look at the matter in the right way, the fact that the Church is so strong in claiming authority as Christ's mouthpiece is a clear and definite sign that

she is in very truth that which she claims to be. For the one quality we require in a truthful witness is his steadfast insistence on the truth of the facts he narrates. If a witness wavers, hesitates, shows signs of doubting, we immediately wonder whether he is telling the truth. The one quality of all others which we should expect to find prominent in a body that really has divine authority to teach truth to the world is that insistent dogmatic tone which is so marked a characteristic of the Catholic Church, as it was also of Jesus Christ Himself. " He spoke as one having authority."

Is it not just the want of authority shown in Christian sects outside the Catholic Church that impresses people so badly, and leads them so often to realize that those sects cannot really be Christ's representatives? Converts have repeatedly borne testimony to this.

But my argument at present is not exactly that the Church is authoritative because historic; I quote history as an analogy. Just as historians must appeal to authority as the whole source of information in their department, and yet no one thinks his mind is fettered by submitting to the authority of history — on the contrary, we feel our minds expanding and developing under the influence of the truth which history thus communicates to us; so the Church conveys her truths to us by virtue of

her authority as God's mouthpiece, and no one who understands the facts thinks himself in any way enslaved or fettered by submitting to that authority and learning from the Church the truths which she claims to teach. On the contrary, the best witnesses tell us of the wonderful expansion and elevation of soul, the great broadening and uplifting of intellect, which result from the acceptance of the doctrines of Catholicism, and from a careful study of those doctrines and assimilation of them, especially when accompanied by meditation and prayer.

Here is the testimony of one illustrious convert from Anglicanism, Father Ronald Knox: "I had been encouraged to suppose and was fully prepared to find that the immediate result of submission to Rome would be the sense of having one's liberty cramped and restricted in a number of ways, necessary no doubt to the welfare of the Church at large, but galling to the individual. . . . The curious thing is that my experience has been exactly the opposite. I have been overwhelmed with the feeling of liberty — the glorious liberty of the sons of God." [1]

[1] *A Spiritual Aeneid.* Page 247.

Chapter Five

FIDELITY IN GUARDING THE MORAL LAW

There are two ways in which the Church can guard the Moral Law. First, she can authoritatively declare what the teaching of the Moral Law is, and, secondly, she can enforce obedience by embodying the principles of the moral code in definite laws or regulations, which she prescribes to guide the conduct of her children.

In other words, the Church can safeguard the Moral Law both against the aberrations of the human intellect, whereby the true teachings of morality may become obscured, and against the wilfulness, weakness, and fickleness of the human will, which so constantly wavers in following what the intellect declares to be the path of duty.

In discharging this function the Church will raise her voice in protest against the adoption of immoral principles in the conduct of life: whether in the private life of the individual, the domestic life of the family, the public life of the nation, or the international life of the world. She will stand up for the rights of the poor against the rich, for the

rights of the worker as against the capitalist, for the rights of the slave, the oppressed, the downtrodden, whether individuals or nations, as against the taskmaster and the despot.

Or again, she will set her face like flint, amidst the storm of the world's abuse, against divorce, the misuse of marriage (however it may be veiled under fair-sounding titles such as Eugenics, birth control, and so forth). She cries out unceasingly against the iniquitous professional practice that indulges daily in child murder and makes many of our maternity hospitals a scandal to Christian civilization.

In these and many other matters man's conscience becomes dulled: repeated disregard of the Natural Law blunts the moral sense, until it actually comes to pass that — outside of the Catholic Church — the ministers of religion themselves are found openly championing the adoption of practices and the acceptance of principles that are entirely at variance with the law of God and the Christian moral code.

It is hardly necessary to quote testimony in support of these statements; the truth of them is well known to all who follow the trend of modern thought. At a recent Birth Control conference held in London, it was declared that practically the only body in the world which still opposes the adop-

tion of their methods is the Roman Catholic Church.

Again, the Church has stood up unflinchingly in defence of her own right to exist as an independent spiritual kingdom founded by Jesus Christ to propagate His teachings and guide His followers on the path of righteousness. All down her history the conflict between Church and State has gone on. Other Christian sects have quickly compounded with the civil authority, have surrendered their rights and become the tools of the State, and we know with what lamentable results. But the story of the Catholic Church is studded with great figures like Wilfrid of York, Lanfranc of Canterbury, Anselm, Thomas à Becket, Gregory the Seventh, Innocent the Third, Pius the Seventh, men who fought, sometimes to the death, for spiritual liberty against the encroachments of the civil authorities.

I say, then, that in the first place the Church defends the Moral Law by keeping its principles ever clear before the world.

In the second place the Church has the duty of enforcing the observance of the Moral Law by embodying its principles in her own legislation.

But the Church is in this different from all other societies in the world: she not only exhorts or commands men to obey the law, and threatens penalties if they fail, but she supplies strength to

enable them to obey by administering to them the Sacraments which Christ committed to her care for this purpose. With this third mandate of the Church (*viz.*, to break to her children the Bread of Christ) we are not concerned here. It is the second function, her powers and rights and duties as a legislator, we are dealing with, and in so far as by the exercise of those powers of legislation she acts as the guardian of the Moral Law.

Authority To Make Laws. — The question of the Church's authority to impose laws on her subjects, and insist upon their observance, and inflict penalties on the refractory, is a very wide one indeed, and in a short chapter like this one can do no more than outline the subject.

I propose to deal with it under three headings.

First, on what grounds does the Church claim authority to pass laws binding her subjects, and insist on their observance: in other words, what is the source of the Church's legislative, judicial, and coactive authority?

Secondly, what is the scope of this authority? For whom can she make laws? And what departments of human activity fall under her jurisdiction?

Thirdly, by the exercise of this legislative authority is the Church usurping the authority of the State or encroaching on the rights and liberties of those outside the Church — *e.g.*, by the Ne temere

decree, which affects at times not only Catholics, but non-Catholics who wish to marry Catholics?

Ever since the year 1907 (when the Ne temere decree was promulgated) the world has not ceased to echo with the din of conflict over this famous document. The battle has been quite Homeric in its intensity, the uproar being (as usually happens) all the more deafening because many of the combatants knew not what they were fighting about, but knew only that a big attack on the Catholic Church was in progress, and they must have a share in it.

A. — With regard to the first point — the grounds on which the Church claims authority to legislate for her children in spiritual matters: the legislative power of the Church arises from the fact that the Church is an independent spiritual empire founded by Christ for the pursuit of a definite end, *viz.*, the salvation of men's souls. You may call the Church an association, an organization, a society, if you prefer, but the term kingdom, or empire, was used by Christ Himself, and tells at once what the great community is destined to be which Christ bade His disciples propagate in the world. To prevent misunderstanding, let us state at once that this empire is not a territorial one. The Church, as such — *i.e.*, in her capacity of a supreme, independent, spiritual kingdom — claims

no material territory to rule over: her empire is not in the lands, but in the hearts of men. Consequently there need be no question of a clash with the rights or authority of the civil State, whose province is to hold territory and provide for the material welfare of her citizens. The two empires can co-exist, ruling over the same individuals, the one providing for the interests of time; the other for those of eternity.

But, then, we must be very clear and very insistent on the fact of the Church's complete independence of the State in her own sphere. The end the Church has in view — *viz.*, the salvation of man's soul, is one of which the State as such takes no cognizance, and the Church derives her authority to further that end, not from the State (which is incapable of giving such authority), but from Christ Himself.

The State is bound to see to the observance of the Moral Law in so far as its infringement interferes with the end the State has in view — *viz.*, the temporal well-being and happiness of its citizens, and this it does by its legislative and judicial system. But the State has no dealings with the private internal life of the citizen; it is not concerned with the spiritual salvation of the individual. It cannot cross the threshold of the soul and minister to its spiritual wants. To do this is the function of the

Church founded by Christ. Christ's business is with the individual soul. Men are saved, not in groups, not in armies or kingdoms, but individually, and with the individual soul Christ deals through His Church. Hence the personal, individual care with which the Church ministers to the needs of her children one by one in the Sacraments, her whole anxiety being that they live and die in God's favor and friendship.

But a necessary condition of salvation is the observance of the Moral Law, not a mere external abstention from stealing or perjury or murder, such as may satisfy the State, but a true, internal, conscientious fulfilment of its precepts. Hence the Church is bound to secure for her children a true knowledge of that law and to assist them in every way to obey it.

From the very beginning of her existence, the Church, basing her action on the words of Christ, from whom she derives her mandate, has claimed and exercised fearlessly this power of passing laws, of judging as to whether they were obeyed, and imposing penalties on the negligent: as may be seen in the acts of the Apostles, the Epistles, and in general in the history of the early Church. Once you admit the unity of the Church — that is, that Christ intended to establish *One* Church for the whole world, not separate churches for each nation

or group of peoples — then it is clear there can be no question of her subordination to the civil State in the exercise of her teaching or legislative functions; otherwise, the one Universal Church would have as many masters as there were heads of States, and all semblance of unity would disappear.

B. *Scope of Her Jurisdiction.* — Now let us consider the extent and scope of this legislative power in the Church. For whom can she make laws? And what departments of human activity fall under her jurisdiction?

(a) With regard to the first, the Church can only make laws for her subjects — that is, for those who enter her fold by Baptism. Hence, in the widest sense, the Church's authority extends to all validly baptized persons. But, alas! a large number of this class are disobedient to her voice, and refuse to acknowledge her claims. They are indeed her children, for they are baptized with her Baptism, but they are rebellious children, and refuse to obey her. Hence, as a rule, the Church does not urge her claims or impose all her laws except on those who have given formal adhesion to her authority — that is, on those whom we especially call Catholics, as distinguished from other baptized persons.

(b) With regard to the *scope* of her laws, that has to be decided by the end for which the Church was established, namely, the spiritual welfare of the

soul in this world and the next. Merely civil or material or political affairs do not concern her, nor does she interfere with them. But to her keeping has been entrusted the *Divine Revelation,* which is to perfect man's intellect, and the *Moral Law,* which is to guide and perfect his will.

As specimens of the departments in which the Church will feel called upon to legislate we may instance the following: —

1. The duty of worshipping God and attending to one's own salvation by prayer. Hence, the Church legislates about hearing Mass on Sunday, annual Confession, Easter Communion, the Sacraments generally.

2. The Duty of respecting the divine institution of the Church, her complete autonomy and independence of all earthly authority in her own sphere. Hence, the Church legislates against supporters of Erastian and other theories which tend to subordinate the Church to the State.

3. The sacredness of human life. Hence the Church's laws condemning abortion, craniotomy, and other practices which disregard the right to life of the unborn child.

4. The sacredness and unity of the marriage bond. Hence the Church's attitude towards divorce, and her matrimonial legislation generally.

5. The supreme value of the gift of faith, and

the duty of each individual to safeguard his own faith and that of his children. Hence the Church's legislation and activity with regard to Catholic education, abstention from Protestant worship, and so forth.

6. Sexual purity. The Church ever insists with St. Paul, on the sacredness of the human body as the temple of the Holy Ghost. Hence the Church's protest against immodesty in dress, theatres, picture shows, and literature.

7. The importance of justice in our dealing with our fellow-men. This involves the right of the individual to hold private property (as against Socialistic Communism), the right of the laborer to a living wage (as against over-developed Capitalism), the right of smaller nations to freedom (as against the public despotism and tyranny of larger nations), the right of the individual to a life of retirement, prayer, devotion, contemplation (as against those who attack celibacy, conventual life, religious Orders).

8. Lastly, the department of charity. The Church in her legislation, as in her teaching and ministry, has ever stood forth as the champion of the poor against the hardheartedness of rich worldlings. She has ever regarded it as peculiarly a part of her mandate to safeguard that dictate of the Moral Law which bids us to be compassionate

towards the needy and succor them to the best of our ability, bestowing on them a reasonable portion of the wealth which God has given to ourselves.

Legislation Not Burdensome. — It might seem, perhaps, in reading a list like this, that Church legislation is likely to be extensive — that it may penetrate into every department of life and become very burdensome. But it really is not so. For while there is a great deal of Church legislation, most of it affects only special sections of Church life. There are very few positive ecclesiastical precepts binding *all* members of the Church, such as those about Sunday Mass, Easter Communion, fast and abstinence. Matrimonial laws affect only those who are married or about to marry; they constitute a large, influential, and popular class of the community; but they do not include everybody. Many laws touch only those in Holy Orders and members of religious communities, who taken all together constitute a mere fraction of the Church.

In practice, the Catholic layman never feels the Church laws to be a burden, even though he has to dine on fish once a week and rise for Mass on Sunday morning, whilst his Protestant neighbor may lie abed as late as he pleases. And even if the law does press hard now and then, he feels that it is a small price to pay for the spiritual comfort,

the peace of soul, the constant solicitude for his welfare which he enjoys as a result of Church membership.

C. — The third point we propose to consider is the question as to whether, by the exercise of this independent legislative authority, the Church encroaches on the rights of the State or on the liberties of those outside her fold. We can, perhaps, discuss this subject most easily by taking that concrete example of marriage legislation which has of late years been attracting so much attention, the Ne temere decree.

According to this decree, no marriage of a Catholic is valid unless it is contracted in the presence of a Catholic priest and two witnesses. It is really legislation for Catholics only, but it affects the case where a Catholic marries a non-Catholic; and that is the cause of all the turmoil.

The chief difficulties brought against the decree are these: —

It invades the rights of the State. As a consequence of the decree, the Church refuses to recognize as married certain people who have been duly and lawfully united by the State — people who, therefore, in the eyes of the law are legally and validly married. Such action on the part of the Church is an intolerable infringement of the supreme rights of the State.

Again, in requiring the parties to a mixed marriage to submit to her conditions the Church is assuming an authority over the non-Catholic party which she does not possess; she is trying to enforce her laws where she has no jurisdiction.

Again, if the Catholic party claims the right to dictate terms requiring that the marriage be celebrated according to the Catholic rite, and that the children be all educated as Catholics, surely the non-Catholic party can claim an equal right to lay down terms and demand that the marriage take place according to the Protestant rite, and that some at least of the children be educated Protestants. Why should all the demands be on one side, and all the concessions on the other?

In considering this matter we have these points to examine: —

1. What right has the Church to legislate about marriage at all, and especially to prescribe conditions affecting its validity, seeing that she has no right to legislate about other contracts, such as buying and selling?

2. Supposing such right to exist in reference to her own children — *viz.*, when two Catholics get married — how can she claim that right when one party to the agreement is not a subject of the Church at all? Everybody admits that the Church has no right to legislate about the marriage of two

Jews. How, then, can she legislate about the marriage of one Jew or Jewess who is about to marry a Catholic?

3. Supposing such action can be regarded as allowable, can it be justified as prudent, as advisable, especially in a country where mixed marriages are frequent, when such legislation tends to embitter non-Catholics and promote sectarian strife?

In answering these three questions we shall, I hope, meet the objections raised above.

Now as to the first point. The Church claims the right to legislate about marriage because the marriage of Christians is a Sacrament,[1] one of the seven Sacraments instituted by Christ, and Christ gave His Church exclusive power over the Sacraments, to protect and administer them. The Church as such does not interfere in purely secular matters, but in those matters that directly touch her divine mission to lead souls to God she has a direct mandate to interfere, and if she neglects to do so, she is unfaithful to her mandate. Matrimony is a Sacrament — *i.e.*, a sacred, symbolic action — which, by the authoritative institution of

[1] Cf. Pius VI. (Breve ad Episc. Motulensem). Hae Causae (matrimoniales) non alia ratione pertinent ad unum Ecclesiæ judicium, nisi quia contractus matrimonialis est vere et proprie unum ex septem sacramentis. The reason why the Church alone has the right to decide matrimonial cases is because the matrimonial contract is truly and properly one of the Seven Sacraments.

Christ, produces certain definite spiritual results in the souls of the contracting parties, just as, in the natural order, the symbolic action of signing a will (the signature is merely a symbol) may produce very important benefits to the legatees. If you attach your name to a cheque for a substantial amount and send it to me, then the stream of golden coin which flows into my purse is a very definite and highly appreciated result of your symbolic action in signing the cheque. This is what philosophers call a moral cause. Now, it is just this moral causality we find in the Sacraments, and to legislate about, to regulate, safeguard, and explain these symbolic or sacramental rites is the Church's business.

I am not here entering into the proof of these statements. They are admitted by all Catholics as an essential part of the Church's teaching, and the proofs are worked out fully by her writers and theologians. I am only concerned here to show the lines on which the Church's argument runs.

Matrimony is a Sacrament. It is, of course, a contract, with certain definite legal results and bearings; but, unlike other contracts, such as buying and selling, this particular contract, when entered into by baptized Christians, has been elevated by Christ to the dignity of a Sacrament, with power to produce in the souls of the contracting parties

certain specific spiritual effects. Consequently, whilst the State regards matrimony merely as a civil agreement, and legislates about it as such, the Church, whilst not interfering with the State's action in reference to the legal effects of marriage, regards it as something higher and holier than a mere civil agreement; and it is because she believes that Christ definitely lifted up the marriage contract to the higher level of being a supernatural, grace-giving Sacrament that the Church authoritatively claims and exercises the right to legislate about and prescribe conditions for the marriage of her subjects; and, of course, from the nature of the case it is clear that her legislation may affect the validity of the contract, just as the conditions prescribed by the State for the proper making of a will affect its validity.

2. Now, let us consider the second point suggested above. Even if we grant the Church's right to legislate about the marriage of her subjects, what right has she to impose obligations upon a person outside her communion, as she seems to do by the Ne temere decree, in so far as it affects mixed marriages?

I reply, in this decree the Catholic Church is legislating for her own children only, but in legislating for them she may have to raise barriers which, whilst intended to safeguard her own children, in-

cidentally affect outsiders, just as if you build a fence around your property you are defending your own rights, but incidentally you are limiting the freedom of others by depriving them of the right to walk across your ground. An example will make this clear. The government of the United States has no jurisdiction or authority over citizens of Britain, France, Italy, Spain, or other completely independent nations; yet Congress can make laws which will seriously affect the citizens of all those other States, although they are outside its jurisdiction.

Take, *e.g.*, a law about passports: no foreigner will be admitted without a passport duly signed. Do the United States authorities thereby claim jurisdiction over the foreigner? No. Yet the foreigner who wishes to land on American soil may lawfully and reasonably be required to fulfil certain conditions, non-compliance with which will cause his exclusion. So with commercial laws, like protective tariffs or regulations forbidding foreign aeroplanes to fly over the country. All such laws limit the freedom of people who are, nevertheless, outside the jurisdiction of those laws.

So it is with the Church when she legislates for mixed marriages. An extern wishes to enter Church territory (so to say) by the gate of matrimony, and the Church requires certain passport

conditions to be fulfilled, and if the newcomer fails to comply with her regulations she regards him as a trespasser. If the non-Catholic thinks those conditions too hard he can withdraw, but no injustice is done him nor any authority claimed over him.

But you may object thus (as we said above): —

It seems unfair that all the demands and conditions should be on the Catholic side, and all the concessions on the other side. Surely the non-Catholic may reasonably demand that his children, or some of them at least, should be educated in his belief (or in no belief if he is an agnostic). Moreover, such a non-Catholic may have strong reasons for wishing his marriage to be celebrated in his own church by his own minister. Furthermore, if the non-Catholic is a sincere believer in his own religion — is, *e.g.*, a conscientious Episcopalian or Presbyterian or Methodist — then, in requiring him to sign a promise to have his children brought up Catholics — *i.e.*, in a religion he believes to be false — the Church is forcing him against his conscience to do what is to his mind wrong.

This argument is one that seems very often to have great weight, and sometimes decides the Catholic party weakly to give way and consent to compromise about the religion of the children — *e.g.*, allowing the girls to follow the religion of the mother, and the boys the religion of the father,

or even to go the length of being married in a Protestant church, omitting the Catholic rite altogether.

Reply. — Now, in reply, we must remember that the obligation which rests on the Catholic party of insisting on the Catholic education of all the children does not arise from the Ne temere decree or any other piece of Church legislation whatever. It is simply a part of the general obligation incumbent on the Catholic to safeguard his own faith and the faith of those for whom he is responsible by every means in his power. To the Catholic it is *always wrong to compromise on matters of faith.* To the Protestant, as such, it need not be, just because he is a Protestant — *viz.*, a man who rejects authority and asserts that private judgment is the final court of appeal in matters of religion. According to the Protestant theory, the true religion for each individual is that which his own enquiries have evolved from his study of the Bible. To most non-Catholics of our time and country (and it is those whom the Ne temere affects) one religion is as good as another, provided a man lives up to it; and hence to the majority of non-Catholics the question as to whether their children shall be Catholics or Protestants does not really involve any question of conscience at all, although it may, and often does, involve questions of

worldly success, since the road to fortune is so often much smoother to the Protestant son of a Protestant father than to a boy who is hampered with the golden shackles of Catholicism.

Of course, if a case occurs where a non-Catholic cannot conscientiously agree to the Church's conditions, the Catholic Church has no intention of asking him to do so. The only solution then seems to be to break off the match altogether.

For the facts are clear: no Catholic can ever, with a good conscience, agree to marry a non-Catholic outside the Catholic Church, or without safeguarding the faith of the children; whereas the majority of non-Catholics who contract mixed marriages submit to the Catholic conditions without any conscientious scruple whatsoever.

3. *Church's Action Wise.* — But now, granting that the Church has the power thus to legislate for her children when marrying a non-Catholic, is it wise for the Church to use this power, and actually to declare null and void a marriage contracted legally and validly according to the law of the land? Is not such action — (1) a usurpation of the rights of the State, a calling in question of its authority? (2) Is it not calculated to stir up bitterness and sectarian strife? (3) May it not really tend to endanger the faith of some of her children, who, once they take the fatal step of

marrying outside the Church, are thereby cut off from the Sacraments and the Church's ministrations?

Now, whilst admitting that, at times, the Church's action may appear very drastic, and even harshly uncompromising, a few moments' reflection will, I think, help to show the wisdom of this particular piece of Church legislation.

Let me repeat what I said above. All the inconveniences urged against the Ne temere decree do not really touch the decree as such, but they do touch that great fundamental obligation of defending one's faith and making every sacrifice for its preservation which is incumbent on every Catholic.

Before the Ne temere decree the obligation of a Catholic not to contract a mixed marriage, except according to the form prescribed by the Church, and to safeguard the faith of the children, was exactly as it is now. The decree did not create this obligation. It did not intensify it nor add to it in any way. What the decree did was to add a new sanction to the fulfilment of this obligation, inasmuch as it declares to be null and void any marriage contracted without fulfilling certain prescribed conditions. Before the decree, a mixed marriage contracted clandestinely (*i.e.*, contracted outside the Church) was sinful, but not always in-

valid. Since the decree, it is both sinful and invalid; and this declaration that a marriage is invalid is in many cases a far more serious threat than illiceity. Consequently the whole difficulty is thrown back on the uncompromising stand taken by the Catholic Church in regard to the sacredness and supreme value of its faith. The life of the body is the supreme good in the natural order; and murder the supreme crime. According to Our Lord's teaching, the life of the soul is the supreme good in the spiritual order, and anything that destroys that life is the supreme evil. To a Catholic, faith enlivened by charity is the life of the soul, and to save that life from destruction all worldly goods must, if necessary, be sacrificed.

If you do not accept this position, and if you think a Catholic is a fool for thus passionately clinging to his faith — well, you are welcome to your opinion, but, at any rate, do not blame the Ne temere decree for effects which do not flow from it. What the Ne temere has done is to rouse many indifferent Catholics to a sense of their duty and remind them that they cannot, and that they must not, without deliberately breaking with the Church, neglect this obligation of fidelity to their faith.

Look at it in this way. You have heard perhaps of proselytizing societies in Ireland, composed of

people who went about trading on the poverty of the people to win them over to Protestantism. The form in which their appeal came was this: When children were starving and a mother was nearly frantic with hunger and torn with anguish at the state of her children, a proselytizing agent appeared with an offer of money, food, a comfortable home, and good education for the children, on condition that she sacrificed their faith and allowed them to be brought up as Protestants. "Soupers" they were called, because of the food bribe held out to the starving people. Now, you know with what execration Irish Catholics, or any Catholics, regard such traffic in souls; what a terrible crime it is for a mother to barter the faith of her children for food even when the children are starving.

But, now, suppose this case. Suppose that, without any such incentive, when there is no question of stifling the pangs of hunger, a Catholic mother deliberately consents to allow her family to be sent to a Protestant school and to be educated as Protestants, simply because it will secure them a higher social standing, will unlock certain fashionable doors to them, will smooth their path in life, and secure a greater measure of material prosperity, what would we think of her? And suppose the Church legislated severely about such a case, and

took strong measures to prevent its recurrence, would we blame the Church?

Well, is not this just the case contemplated by the Ne temere decree when it legislates about mixed marriages? When a Catholic girl marries a Protestant outside the Catholic Church, with an understanding that the children shall be Protestants, is she not just as wilfully and deliberately sacrificing the faith of her children as the poor mother who hands her children over to the proselytizers, except that she has not the extenuating circumstance of being driven to it by fear of starvation? Can the Church be thought severe if she has resort to the extremest measures in order to prevent such a disaster?

The Church legislation is really merciful in its severity, since it helps to save from a lifetime of remorse and the loss of their faith the Catholic boy or girl who, under the influence of strong affection or passion, hardly stops to think of the future.

The Church legislates with her eyes upon eternity. To her the things of time are of small moment compared with the salvation of the soul. " Safety first " is a rule that is sometimes irksome, but pays best in the long run. This maxim is pre-eminently the Church's principle. Look first of all to your eternal salvation; keep that as an inviolable rule

at any cost, and then other things will right themselves.

By her matrimonial legislation, then, the Church is acting as the faithful guardian of the Moral Law. The Church's business in the world is not merely to look on and let things drift; her mission is to act.

And the Church's obligation to interfere where marriage is concerned is all the more urgent because the whole future of the Church depends upon the disposition of people who enter the married state and take up the supreme responsibility of bringing new lives into existence.

Now let us consider the objection raised by our adversaries — that by the Ne temere the Church is encroaching on the rights of the State in refusing to recognize as validly married, people whom the State asserts to be such.

The State treats marriage as a civil contract or agreement, and, so, legislates about it, making its civil and legal effects depend on the observance of certain conditions. With this aspect of marriage the Church does not interfere, any more than she interferes with the legal conditions required for a valid will or a valid sale. But, in the case of her own children (over whom alone she claims to exercise jurisdiction), she demands something more before she is willing to regard them as having fulfilled the conditions for a valid union. To two

Catholics who have been married before the registrar, the Church says: You are married in the eyes of the law, and have secured all the legal effects which the law allows you as a married person, but you are also MY subjects, and are bound to conform to my law, and the requirements of that law you have not yet fulfilled; consequently, in the eyes of the Church you are not yet validly married. There is here no interference with the rights of the State.

If, however, our adversaries mean by their objection that the State has a right to dictate to the Church what doctrine she should hold about marriage, or what legislation she should adopt, then we simply deny any such right on the part of the State. After all, there are other points connected with marriage (besides that involved in the Ne temere) on which the Church holds views very different from those of modern statesmen. On the subject of divorce the Catholic Church finds herself diametrically opposed to the views of nearly all civilized States of modern times. And, as a result of this difference of view, a large number of marriages which the State recognizes as valid the Church denounces as unlawful and invalid. The modern State claims authority to dissolve the bond of matrimony, and permit people who are legally and validly married to separate, and then enter into

new matrimonial bonds with other persons, and even to repeat this process as often as they can persuade the Divorce Court to listen to their plea.

The Catholic Church absolutely refuses to recognize any such power to grant a divorce dissolving the matrimonial bond. Once a baptized Christian is validly married, and the marriage has been consummated, then nothing can dissolve that bond except death; and all the legislation in the world, and all the kings and emperors in the world, have absolutely no authority to dissolve that bond and give that man leave to marry again as long as his wife is alive. And when the law grants him a divorce, and on the strength of that divorce he takes another wife, then, in the eyes of the Church, the second marriage is null and void, and no power on earth can make her assert that it is valid.

Now, the number of marriages which the Church thus considers invalid, because one of the parties is divorced and has a former partner still living, must be enormously greater than the number of mixed marriages which are invalid on account of the neglect of Ne temere. Why, then, so much excitement about the Ne temere decree? They talk sometimes of imposing penalties on Catholics who dare to question the validity of a mixed marriage which has been ratified by the State. Will

they also send us to jail for refusing to recognize divorce, and for denying, as we do, the validity of a subsequent marriage so long as the first partner is alive?

And if they should send us to jail, are they likely to improve matters? Is the Catholic Church likely to flinch because men try to coerce her into changing her views?

It was just on a matrimonial point of this kind that Henry the Eighth tried to force the Pope's hand in the sixteenth century. He wanted the Pope to declare invalid a marriage which the Pope regarded as valid, and rather than yield on this point of principle the Pope allowed England to cut herself loose from the Apostolic See. Henry the Eighth then saw the great advantages that would accrue to him, especially in his matrimonial affairs, if he were himself the supreme head in spiritual matters, and so he simply stepped into that position, and the English people were fools enough to submit to him. Henry married Ann Boleyn in spite of the fact that his first wife was still alive, a fact which, in the eyes of the Church, constituted an impediment to the validity of his union with Ann Boleyn. Very soon Henry wanted to marry a third lady; this time (to prevent, I suppose, the multiplication of impediments) he removed poor Ann Boleyn's head. Shall we be punished for ven-

turing to impugn the validity of Henry the Eighth's marriage with Ann Boleyn?

The Church was but a little while in existence when a certain high State official spoke to the then head of the Church, who was teaching certain doctrines which this official disapproved of, as follows:— " Commanding, we commanded you that you should not teach in this name, and, behold, you have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine." Peter the Apostle, answering, said: " We ought to obey God rather than men."

That sentence has rung like a tocsin in the ears of the Church ever since, and during nineteen hundred years of vicissitudes she has time and again come in contact with civil authorities, who in like manner bade her be silent or change her teaching. Her answer has ever been, " We ought to obey God rather than men."

In the case of Peter and the Apostles penalties were inflicted to emphasize the lesson. " Calling in the Apostles, after they had scourged them, they charged them that they should not speak at all in the name of Jesus." What was the effect of the scourging? Did it produce the desired effect? Did it seal the lips of Peter? Did it dull his spirit and make him lick the feet of those State officials who would dictate to him what doctrine he should hold and preach? Here is what is written: " And

they (the Apostles) went forth from the presence of the Council, rejoicing that they were accounted worthy to suffer reproach for the name of Jesus. And every day they ceased not, in the temple, and from house to house, to teach and preach Christ Jesus."

That was the example which Peter gave to the world of how the Church would take her stand in defence of the Moral Law. "We ought to obey God rather than men"; and in defence of that principle the Church, in Peter's person, made her protest on that day nineteen hundred years ago in Jerusalem, and in defence of that principle the Church adopts the same attitude to-day, having seen no reason during the lapse of those long centuries to change her mind or be faithless to the mandate given her by her Founder — to be to the world the interpreter, the champion, and the fearless exponent of the Moral Law.

Chapter Six

AUTHORITY IN TEACHING TRUTH

In the year 1534 Henry VIII, King of England, forsook the allegiance which, as a Catholic, he owed to the Pope and declared that he himself, being King of England, would also henceforth be the spiritual head of the English Church. Henry VIII was a masterful man, a man of strong passions and iron will: and, as the Pope of Rome refused to help him get rid of his lawful wife, Catherine of Aragon, in order that he might wed one of the Queen's maids of honor, Anne Boleyn, therefore Henry would shake off the Pope's authority; would arrogate to himself the powers of spiritual headship, and so solve, simply and satisfactorily, his matrimonial problems. Perhaps no single act of an irresponsible monarch has had such far-reaching effects in the world at large as this act of King Henry VIII.

For it came about that this English nation, which at the time that King Henry VIII ruled over it was almost entirely confined within the shores of Great Britain (England at that time had hardly a single foreign possession), has since that time

flowed out all over the world, and wherever it went it brought with it not only its Saxon tongue, but also its Anglican religion or some variety of it — that is, the mutilated remnants of Catholicism which survived after the storm of the English Reformation had done its deadly work.

Henry's Rebellion. — And so it comes about that the English-speaking world to-day is everywhere affected in its religious affairs by this act of Henry VIII. The roar of rebellion which he gave vent to has found an echo in every part of the world wherever English-speaking men do congregate. And hence it happens that we Catholics, we English-speaking Catholics, who live surrounded by people who have inherited, if not always the religion of Henry VIII, at least his spirit of opposition to Rome, must ever be on the defensive, must keep ever asserting that our religious beliefs as Catholics are sane and sensible and founded on right reason. Hence the ever increasing number of books and lectures on apologetics. They are a reiterated statement or exposition of the principles on which Catholicism rests, an endeavor to answer the question, "Why am I a Catholic?" and to make clear not only to outsiders, but to Catholics themselves, the reasons for the faith which they profess.

Difficulties of Catholicism. — For Catholicism

is, in many respects, a difficult religion to accept, and a difficult religion to live up to in a practical way. Catholicism is a positive religion with definite doctrines and clear-cut teaching which its followers must accept; and it has definite laws which must be obeyed; laws, too, which sometimes press hard on weak human nature — such as the law of confessing one's sins; of making restitution of ill-gotten goods; of hearing Mass every Sunday; of abstaining from meat on Fridays; of submitting to marriage regulations, and so forth. From the merely natural point of view it is evidently far easier to be a Protestant or an unbeliever, to scoff at religion, to fling off the restraints of dogma and morality and allow oneself every licence which the heart craves for, than to submit to the laws and discipline of the Catholic Church.

In other words, Catholicism demands submission, obedience and humility: and Henry VIII cared for none of these things, and the example he set has been extremely contagious; so that by his memorable shaking off of the Roman yoke, he has made the English-speaking world a somewhat difficult place for Catholicism to flourish in.

Independence of the Church's Authority. — And yet it is just that stubborn thing which Henry VIII attacked and tried to get rid of, *viz.*, the independent spiritual authority of the Catholic Church

in teaching doctrine and enforcing the moral law, which to many minds is the strongest proof that the Catholic Church is really the Church founded by Christ on earth. The conflict with Henry VIII was one of those shocks of battle which serve to show the metal of which the Church is made.

The hurricane in mid-ocean tests the stoutness of the ship: the rage of storm and flood shows whether the house is built on a rock; and so it is the fire of persecution, the threats of earthly potentates that test the qualities of a spiritual organization like the Catholic Church. And it is just because to-day, after weathering the incalculable storms of nineteen centuries, the Catholic Church speaks with the same clear, calm, decided tones of authority when teaching truth or vindicating the moral law as she did in days gone by, that we cling to her as the true Church, founded by Christ, that we set our feet firmly within her sheltering walls, since we are convinced that her foundations are resting securely on the immovable rock of Christ's promise, " the gates of hell shall not prevail against her."

When Peter Came to Rome. — Transport yourself in spirit for a few moments to the days when the Roman Empire was at its height, when the great city of Rome flowed in a sea of marble all over her seven hills; when the Mediterranean was a Roman

lake, every people and nation around its shores doing homage and paying tribute to the great central authority. It was an idolatrous world. Rome was filled with gorgeous temples that vied with each other in architectural splendor, every one of them dedicated to the worship of false, licentious gods.

Imagine you are standing outside the southern gates of that vast metropolis on a certain day about the middle of the first century of our era. You notice trudging along the Appian Way, which was the great thoroughfare leading from the south, a poor Jewish pedlar (as it seems) with a single companion, about to enter the city of Rome for the first time. As he approaches the great gates, through which so many conquering consuls, generals and armies had marched in triumph during the past two centuries, a chariot drives forth, speeding along the Appian Way towards Capua, and in the chariot is seated the Emperor — the proud Lord of the World — glittering in purple and gold and jewels. As he whirls past, his eye rests for a moment on the poverty-stricken Jew who is toiling steadily towards the city.

A Vision of the Future. — Suppose someone had whispered into that Emperor's ear as he sat in his chariot, " Do you see that poor Jew? That man is coming to conquer your city: he is entering Rome to-day in order to overthrow her idols, to destroy

her temples, to cleanse this vast cesspool of iniquity where all the moral filth, all the degrading cults of East and West are gathered together, and to set up in place of all this idolatry and paganism the worship of the true God. He has come to set up a spiritual authority, a throne that shall last on for long ages after your throne, O Emperor, shall have crumbled into dust. When your world-wide Empire, that now fills all men's thoughts, shall be a memory of the distant past, then the successor of this Jewish fisherman shall still speak with tones of authority, shall impose laws upon mankind, and claim to be the teacher of truth, and millions of faithful people in every part of the world shall voluntarily hearken to his words and accept his teaching."

Had someone addressed the Emperor thus on that summer's day as he reclined at ease in his chariot, how loud would have been his laughter; with what mockery and incredulity he would have treated such a prophecy as the utterance of some brain-sick lunatic!

Yet that prophecy has been fulfilled. The Roman Empire has passed away; the names of her emperors and great men are fading into oblivion; a new civilization has sprung up on her ruins; nation after nation has risen and fallen since she sat in majesty throned on her seven hills; and yet the

Authority which Peter, the fisherman of Galilee, set up at his Master's bidding in that pagan city of Rome still sways the world: the voice of Peter's successor is still ringing out with as clear a tone of conscious strength as in those far-off days when Peter addressed so masterfully the lame man in the Temple who asked for alms, " Gold and silver have I none: but what I have I give thee. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth arise and walk," or when, in stern accents, the same Peter denounced the deceitful conduct of Ananias, " Why hast thou conceived this thing in thy heart? Thou hast not lied to men, but to God."

Christ's Bold Plan. — Christ came to found an Empire or Kingdom that would deal not merely with man's external but chiefly with his internal life; not a political but a spiritual Kingdom. Christ's business is with man's soul and its relationship to God, and therefore He set up an authority that would exercise control in this interior kingdom of the soul.

It was indeed a bold undertaking. When Christ was born, Greek philosophy had for some five or six centuries been wrestling in futile efforts with the great problems of life — the question of the existence and nature of God, of the immortality of the soul, the freedom of the will and man's moral responsibility for his actions, the nature of virtue

and vice. And the result of all those toiling centuries of speculation was simply chaos and a despair of ever attaining truth. Natural reason was bankrupt and helpless; it had failed ignominiously to solve the riddle of life.

In the department of morals, things were at their lowest ebb. Lust, cruelty, vice of every description held sway unchecked. The emperors and rulers who might have been expected to stem the torrent of iniquity were themselves only too often the leaders in unnatural self-indulgence and a scandal to their subjects.

And Jesus came to find a remedy for this state of things. He will not meddle directly with human kingdoms or deal with political issues. His plan is something very daring and very wonderful. He will claim to rule men's thoughts and to guide the secret choice of their inmost souls. He will found a kingdom not on territory of land or sea, but in the universe of the spirit.

By What Right? — And by what right does He make this tremendous claim? How can He dare to enter the castle of your soul, which is each man's private and inalienable possession and territory, and dictate what you are to believe and how you are to choose in that inner sanctuary?

The answer is: He claims this right because He is the King of Truth, because He is the Light of

the World, because He is the Incarnation of that which is the source of all knowledge and of all thinking: the Mind of God. The human intellect owes allegiance to no monarch except one; but to that Monarch the intellect must submit with absolute loyalty, or else be involved in hopeless ruin; and that Monarch is Truth.

When Jesus came His claims were misunderstood. The rulers of the earth grew jealous of Him; He was arraigned before the representative of Roman authority, and the Governor Pontius Pilate sternly demanded of Him, "Art thou a King then?" And Christ's answer rang forth clear and strong: "Yes, I am a King; but My Kingdom is not of this world — I do not claim to rule as earthly monarchs do; but for this was I born, and for this came I into the world that I might give testimony to the truth. And everyone that is of the truth heareth my voice."

This, then, is Christ's claim: He has come to tell the world the truth about God. And the service He demands is that you accept His teaching as being that of God Himself.

The Catholic Claim. — Now, the Catholic Church claims that she knows the mind of Christ, that she possesses His teaching; and she asks you to accept that teaching on His authority — that is, on the authority of God Himself. The Church is

the mouthpiece and exponent of Christ's teaching. She does not ask you to believe on her own authority, but on His; although *her* authority is necessary to safeguard you in the matter of the transmission of Christ's message to you.

Suppose the Prime Minister of England sends a telegram to the President of the United States: the messenger who delivers the telegram at the White House, the telegraph operators who transmit the message from London to Washington, are all necessary for the conveying of the message. But on whose authority does the President rely for the truth of the statements contained in the telegram? Simply on the authority of the English Prime Minister; not, evidently, on the authority of the telegraph boy or the operators even though the fidelity of these officials is essential for the safe delivery of the message without loss or change.

Now, so it is with the Church. She claims to be the medium of communication between your mind and Christ's — she transmits His message to you. You accept that message as true on His authority; that is why your act of acceptance or assent is an act of divine faith. But in order to elicit this act of faith you must also rely on the fidelity of the Church in handing on and delivering the message without change or loss to you; and that is what we

mean when we say that the Church has authority from Christ to teach His doctrines without error, or that the Church is infallible in matters of faith or morals.

Infallibility. — This word, Infallibility, is one which, from the contemptuous way it has been used at times by our opponents (who often speak in ignorance of what the word means to a Catholic), has come to have a rather formidable connotation for many people. But, in reality, the state of things which the word Infallibility describes is one that all are familiar with in daily life.

I mean there are plenty of facts in the natural order which you know on the authority of others of which you are infallibly certain. For example, you are quite convinced that Japan exists, although you may never have visited the Mikado's dominions. You are infallibly sure of this statement, " Japan exists " — *i.e.*, all possibility of error with regard to that proposition is excluded. By what process of reasoning you reach that state of positive certitude is another question.

Or, again, that a great war took place in Europe from 1914 to 1918, that a great many men were killed, that a landing took place at Gallipoli, that vast armaments were sent across the Atlantic by the United States: all these events are known to us with infallible certainty, although for most of

us they rest entirely on the evidence of other people.

Can Error be Excluded? — Now, when we enquire if the Church is infallible, we are simply asking whether error can, with equal certainty, be excluded in the department of religious thought. And when the Catholic Church claims to be infallible in her teachings, she is simply claiming for revealed truth, as now possessed by us, that freedom from error which everyone acknowledges can be, and has been, secured in many departments of philosophical, historical and scientific investigation.

Christ's Words. — When we turn to the Gospels we find clear evidence that Jesus Christ sent out His Apostles to teach the doctrines they had learned from Him, and to demand the submission of faith to the doctrines they propounded in His name. When about to leave His Apostles, Jesus said to them: "Teach all men to observe the things I have commanded you; and behold I am with you (to help you) all days even to the end of the world" (Matthew xxviii:20). "He that believeth (*i.e.*, he that accepts My doctrines as proposed by you, My disciples) and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be condemned" (Mark xvi:16).

An Ample Commission. — Surely that statement implies a very full and ample commission given to

His disciples to teach mankind, and to teach truth which would be known to be such with infallible certitude; else how could He demand the submission of faith to it?

" Verily I say unto you, He that receiveth whomsoever I send, receiveth me: and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me " (John xiii:20).

But I need not multiply quotations. All the evidence of the early history of the Church goes to prove that from the very beginning the Church claimed to be a teaching body, with divine authority to set forth God's Revelation to the world. Now, taking this fact as admitted — and, indeed, hardly any fact about Christ's mission is more evident — I ask this question: What body of people in the world to-day claims to carry on this work of Jesus Christ? What body of Christians claims to *teach* authoritatively His doctrines and demands submission to them by an act of faith simply because they are God's revealed word?

The Insistent Catholic Church. — The answer is not far to seek. The Catholic Church, and the Catholic Church alone, makes this claim. She makes this claim loudly and insistently: she makes it in the face of a protesting world, she makes it in season and out of season, and she declares that never once in her long history from the days of Simon Peter of Galilee to the days of Pope Pius XI,

has she ceased from urging that claim and asserting her authority to teach the world truth in matters of religion and to enforce the observance of God's law.

Is It Arrogance? — To many people the claim of the Catholic Church so boldly put forward may look like arrogance; and indeed on modern Protestant ideas of a Church one may admit that such a claim would be arrogance and folly. For on Protestant principles a Church is merely a human institution (like the civil State), without any special guarantee of freedom from error in teaching — without any special prerogative of infallibility which would justify such claims as those put forward by the Catholic Church. But the Church as instituted by Christ, was not intended to be merely a collection of men like a University occupied in amassing and distributing knowledge; not merely a school of thought like a philosophical society occupied in expounding the mind of a dead founder. The Catholic Church claims to be a living, teaching authority, witnessing to the truth by virtue of the fact that Christ, who founded her, is still actually living in her, working through her, building her up day by day, teaching mankind through her lips, feeding men sacramentally through her ministry, guiding and shaping men's lives through her laws and discipline.

And, apart from the fact that historically we see that such a living authority was what Christ actually instituted and intended His Church to be, does not our own instinct, our natural reason, tell us that such a living authority corresponds to the needs of our soul in its search for truth?

The Hunger for Truth. — We are all hungry for truth about God. All of us, fellow-travellers on this mysterious road of life, are eagerly scanning the horizon of the future, conjecturing as to what it may have in store for us; and especially our eyes are riveted on the hills of death that bound that horizon, and the soul is yearning to know something about the fate or experiences that await it when it crosses those hills now shrouded in such impenetrable gloom. And if there is a body or association of men in the world who claim to hold in fee the precious treasure of God's Revelation, who claim by virtue of the divine knowledge committed to them to be able to guide us on the road to God and tell us something definite about life after death, and the responsibilites of our position here below, then surely our reason tells us that such a body or society must speak with an authoritative and decisive voice if they are adequately to satisfy the craving of the soul for light.

The world of thought in which we live, participation in which constitutes our highest activity, is

indeed very wonderful. And through man's exertion and ceaseless effort the bounds of that world of knowledge have been marvellously extended. Man's rapacious, exploring spirit has penetrated into every recess, has ransacked every department of nature, and scrutinized every record, in order to fill the coffers of his mind with the gold of truth.

Has God Spoken? — Now, is it credible that God, Who has thus spread out for man's investigation the treasures of His glorious universe, should have left man without any adequate means of attaining true and certain knowledge of God Himself, of the Mind that has planned it all?

That God should communicate Himself fully to one human intellect, namely, the intellect of Christ, and then that through this intellect, flooded with clear knowledge of the Godhead, He should instruct the rest of the human race, is altogether in accord with the method He pursues in other departments of knowledge. The child learns from its parents; the disciple from his master; the student artists and musicians of to-day feed their souls on the great achievements of master minds in the past. The story of the human intellect is the story of this ceaseless handing on of the light of knowledge, just as the physical history of the race is the story of a ceaseless handing on of the torch of life.

The Keepers of Truth. — Now, the precious

trust of divine knowledge thus communicated to mankind through certain selected souls supernaturally illuminated — the prophets and seers — must be guarded securely lest it be corrupted and lost. And the guardians of that treasure must be equipped with efficient means to carry out their high and responsible task. They must be safeguarded against teaching error, they must be qualified to tell men in no uncertain or hesitating tones what their duty is to God: in other words, they must be equipped with authority to teach truth and enforce the moral law.

Conclusion. — And when a Priest of the Catholic Church stands up to speak of her doctrines and her teaching, to express a little of what her life is like — in whose name does he speak? Is he simply voicing the opinions which he himself may have privately conceived? or putting forth theories which have been recently thought out? No! The Catholic preacher is supported by the teaching authority of the Catholic Church, by whose commission alone he can dare to enter a Catholic pulpit. His own personal authority may perhaps be slight, his own words may be weak and faltering, but when he is announcing the doctrines of the Catholic Church he is handing on the same truths as are being also taught authoritatively in a hundred thousand Catholic pulpits throughout the world; he is

teaching the very revealed truths that echoed from the Catholic pulpits of England four hundred years ago, when the great betrayal by the Tudor monarchs took place; and these are the truths that were brought to Canterbury a thousand years earlier by the Benedictine monk Augustine, when sent by Pope Gregory I to convert the Saxons; these, again the truths which five hundred years earlier were taught to the world by Peter and Paul and James and John and the other Apostles, who learned them from the lips of Christ Himself.

And all down those long centuries of teaching and preaching you will remark ever the same confident tone of conscious authority.

How do you explain this? How is it that amidst the ever shifting currents of human opinion such absolute steadiness and oneness of doctrine should be found in the Catholic Church in every nation and people and clime, and in the Catholic Church alone? And that this unanimity should go on century after century amidst all the revolutions and upheavals which time inevitably brings? The answer is: This miracle is explained by the fact that the Catholic Church has *divine* authority to teach truth, that she is a living organ of truth; that the words of Christ have in this way been literally fulfilled. " Behold I am with you all days even to the

end of the world! " Consequently we are justified in asserting that the fact that the Catholic Church alone displays real authority in teaching truth and enforcing the Moral Law is a plain and cogent reason for belonging to her communion.

Chapter Seven

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH ESSENTIAL TO REAL PROGRESS

There is no idea, perhaps, on which the modern world so prides itself as that of progress, and it is often assumed by those outside the Catholic Church that Catholicism is a doctrine or system which is, on the whole, hostile to progress, and that the reason why the world has gone ahead with such startling rapidity during the past three or four hundred years is that a great revolt against Catholicism took place in the sixteenth century. There are educated men of a certain stamp of mind, such as, for example, the late Professor Bury, Regius Professor of History at Cambridge, England, who regard the Catholic Church as the great enemy of what they call Free Thought. The Church, in their view, tyrannizes over the intellect of man, lays down harsh laws as to what he may think and believe, and thus cramps his power of speculation and investigation; with the result that the faculty of invention and discovery is stunted and warped. The Reformation was, they say, essentially a revolt

against intellectual tyranny; it was the triumphant assertion of man's right to think for himself.

Now, it evidently concerns us Catholics to examine carefully into those charges. Man lives by his thought. In the interior sanctuary of the soul a man works out his own destiny for better or for worse, and it would be an intolerable state of things if a usurper were to rob any individual man of his supreme birthright — liberty of thought and action. Revolt against tyranny is a fundamental tendency of human nature; it is simply the expression of that innate love of freedom which is one of the noblest instincts of the heart of man, and an instinct that has inspired his most stirring deeds all down the ages.

Is the Church Hostile to Progress? — The charge, therefore, that the Catholic Church is hostile to true progress, would be a very serious one if true. But we hope to show that the charge is a gross and unfounded libel; that so far from the Catholic Church being an enemy to progress, she is herself one of the most powerful instruments of progress which humanity has known: that, in fact, she plays such a definite and essential part in helping on true progress that, without her, progress in the proper sense of the term is impossible.

The world may persecute Catholicism in certain countries, as we see to-day in Mexico and Russia,

and may for a while crush and drive out Catholicism by sheer physical force. But the result of such action always has been, and always will be, to prove all the more convincingly how essential the Church is to the world, the utter impossibility of doing without the Catholic Church if the world is to advance in true civilization.

Two Methods of Enquiry. — Now there are two ways of looking at this question — two methods of seeking a solution.

One would be to look back over the history of the Catholic Church and see what part her children have actually played in promoting the progress of mankind. " By their fruits you shall know them." The question as to whether a certain food or medicine is beneficial or harmful is best solved by actual experiment. If the Catholic system tends to cramp or enslave the minds of her children, well, that must show itself in history: and so we ought to find Catholics backward in the march of progress; very few Catholic names should figure in the honour rolls of science, art, literature, discovery and human achievement generally.

It may be well to note that we are not discussing at present the supernatural work which is the chief purpose of the existence of the Catholic Church. All Catholics know that the Church exists primarily to communicate supernatural life to the soul, to

maintain and nourish that life, and so lead men to the possession of God in heaven. But we are here dealing rather with what I may call the by-products of Catholicism. That is, we are examining the effect of Catholicism and of Catholic principles on the development of mankind in those various departments of human activity which we designate as literature, art, philosophy, social life, and so on: which are not directly religious or supernatural, and are the result of man's dealing with the visible, tangible things around him here on earth. The Church is not instituted to deal directly with those earthly and temporal matters. That is the business of the civil State, which is in existence to look after man's temporal welfare — to provide for his temporal wants and help him to enjoy peace, happiness, and prosperity during his life on earth.

But still it is evident that the principles and ideas of a man's religion will inevitably react upon his conduct in the other departments of life.

Three Departments of Thought. — Now to turn to our enquiry. Leaving religion aside for the moment, there are three great departments of human thought, progress in which means progress for the race — *viz.*, art, science, and philosophy.

Through art man develops and gives outward expression to his sense of the beautiful. Through sci-

ence he investigates the facts, the forces, and the laws of the material world around him, and strives to acquire more and more control over that world and its forces. Through philosophy his mind reaches out to the deeper problems that underlie existence, and strives to get an insight into the ultimate causes that explain the universe and man himself.

Now, if we ask ourselves the question: "How does Catholicism stand in reference to these three departments of thought and of human effort — art, science and philosophy?" — what answer can we give? And first, in the realm of art. What influence has the Catholic Church exercised? Well, the answer is easily given: The Catholic Church has ever been the Mother of all the arts. Take these headings: Architecture, Painting, Music, Sculpture, Poetry. Dwell in thought for a few moments on each of these, and you will see how preposterous is the statement that Catholicism tends to cramp the intellect. Let us take just one example — architecture.

Architecture. — What institution is it that more than any other human society that ever existed has developed architecture to its highest perfection; has given to the world those marvellous buildings — aptly called poems in stone — that are the models to which all architects for all time

turn for enlightenment and inspiration? You know it is the Catholic Church.

From the early days of the Emperor Constantine, when his great edict gave the Church liberty to come out into the open and use her skill in fashioning her buildings beautifully, to the age of the great Romanesque and Gothic cathedrals, and right on to modern times, the Church has ever been educating her children and lifting their hearts to God by the beauty and artistic splendor of her edifices. Think of the first glorious specimen of the Byzantine style — the great church of Sancta Sophia in Constantinople. It is a triumph of architecture, and although it has now been for nearly five hundred years (since the capture of Constantinople in 1453) a Turkish mosque, it still stands an imperishable monument to the glorious width of view and grandeur of thought fostered and developed in its children by the Christian faith. The dome of Sancta Sophia was so wonderfully and delicately set upon its pillars that men said it seemed as though it were suspended from heaven by chains!

Other glorious Byzantine churches were built at Ravenna and elsewhere, but the culmination of the Byzantine style is to be found in St. Mark's, Venice. It is one of the most remarkable and interesting and beautiful churches in the world. Yet it was built in

the eleventh century, during the " Dark Ages," as they are called, and it shows that the men who built it had an extraordinary sense of beauty and proportion, marvellous mechanical dexterity and grasp of architectural principles; that, in fact, they were men with splendidly developed intellectual and æsthetic power. And whence did they derive their inspiration? What mistress filled their souls with the vision of beauty they bodied forth so marvellously in stone? You know it was the Catholic Faith.

Gothic Cathedrals. — Then came the development of the Romanesque: and after that the great Gothic cathedrals which are studded all over Europe — splendid evidence of the intellectual greatness and activity of those centuries during which Catholicism held undisputed sway over men's minds. Ever since that time, the world goes back to those Catholic monuments to learn how to build. So is it also in painting, sculpture, music and minor arts and crafts, such as illuminating MSS. In every one of these departments all the great names are Catholic: and in most cases the subject chosen by the artist for treatment was suggested to him by his Catholic faith.

In the department of science we shall find the same story. The greatest names that figure in the roll of world-famous scientists, from Roger Bacon

and Albertus Magnus, through Copernicus and Galileo down to Ampère, Mendel, Pasteur, and a host of other modern investigators, are Catholic. So it is also in the department of philosophy. But I shall not dwell longer on this aspect of the subject, as there are many books dealing with it and setting forth the vast array of splendid names in every department of human activity which the Catholic Church can boast of.

Second Method of Enquiry.—Let us now turn to the second method of investigation. This method consists not so much in examining the records of Catholic achievement in the history of the world's progress, but rather in asking whether there are certain great fundamental principles involved in Catholic teaching, and constantly insisted on by the Catholic Church, which are basic and essential for progress in the true sense of the word. The expression, "human progress," can be employed in two senses, one a partial, inadequate and misleading sense, and the other the true and full meaning of the term. In the partial and misleading sense it means the development of everything that pertains to the comfort and well-being of man during his life on earth, and all that goes to securing greater pleasure and ease of body and mind, but without any reference to the soul's destiny in the life to come. In this view man's center of

gravity is placed entirely in this world; it knows nothing of God, immortality, or life after death, and, consequently, has no reference to religion. It is simply godless. This modern materialistic progress largely centers round three ideas. First, in the material order, the supremacy of physical science; secondly, in philosophy, the theory of evolution as the ultimate explanation of the universe; and, thirdly, in religion, agnosticism. In the material order the modern world is proud (and naturally so) of its achievements in science, of the progress of invention — the unceasing development of apparatus for making life pleasant, for improving methods of human communication and rapid transit. It glories in the fact that the motorcar, the aeroplane, wireless telephony, and moving pictures are revolutionizing civilized life.

Evolution. — In the department of philosophy no idea has so captivated the modern mind as that of Evolution: and, remember, the evolution of which modern men and women are so enamored is the theory (regarded by many as proven fact) that not only man's body but his soul also — his faculties of thinking and reasoning and willing — have gradually evolved and developed from the lower animals. We are the children of the apes. The civilized world is nothing but an extensive

monkey house of a superior type. The soul of Shakespeare that produced Macbeth and Hamlet, the superb intellect of Michelangelo that produced the marble Moses and the dome of St. Peter's, were somehow latent in that tangle of apes out of which — so Bishop Barnes assures us — man emerged some million years ago. That is the doctrine as to the origin of the soul which we are asked to accept in the name of modern progress. We are asked to substitute this doctrine for the Christian teaching that the soul is created directly by the hand of God — is God's greatest masterpiece.

And in the third department, *viz.*, of Religion, what is the attitude of modern progressive thinkers? How does the world outside of the Catholic Church stand in reference to the great questions of the existence of God, the spirituality and immortality of the soul, and its destiny after death? The answer either is agnosticism, "we do not know," or a crude denial of the existence of a spiritual world altogether.

True Idea of Progress. — That, I say, is an outline — and, I think, a fairly accurate one — of the trend of what is called modern progress. And the mere statement of its principles is a strong argument in favor of my thesis — that the Catholic Church is essential to true progress. For I affirm

that true progress means the development of man's powers and faculties along right lines of thought. And no line of thought can be right which does not recognize in the first place the supreme value of the spiritual soul in man. A progress that lays its main emphasis on the cult of the body and of bodily comfort, that concerns itself only with man's material welfare, which turns away from God and the things of religion, is not a true progress. And it is the function of the Catholic Church to keep men travelling on right lines in all their efforts to improve themselves.

The function of the Church in this respect may be compared to that of the men who are constantly testing the rails and sleepers on the permanent way: constantly tapping the wheels and examining the rolling stock to make sure that all is safe. When you travel in a fast express and sleep unconcernedly in your cabin bed as the train plunges at a high speed through the darkness of the night — what is the essential condition of such security? What is it creates this confidence and enables you to rest at ease in such a seemingly perilous adventure? Just the fact that a lynx-eyed body of experts is watching the railroad and making sure that all is safe. Here, too, the price of liberty is ceaseless vigilance.

Testing the Foundations. — Now, so is it also

in that great, adventurous journey into the unknown which we call Progress.

The great fundamental principles on which human lives are to be lived must be incessantly watched over and safeguarded, and it is this function which is fulfilled by the Catholic Church.

The essential business of the Catholic Church is to deal with the deep, hidden springs of our intellectual and moral life. She has untiringly to test and safeguard the steel rails, the strong, deep foundations on which our life of thought and sentiment and emotion and choosing and willing must move, if it is to advance safely and not end in ruin.

Controlling Man's Energy. — The Catholic Church checks the vagaries of the human mind; but does this imply cramping men's liberty of thought?

Thinking means spiritual energy; and all energy or force requires to be directed in order to produce beneficial results.

Steam and fire become man's useful servants only when kept under proper control. The banks of a river which guide the flow of its stream do not hinder its utility. No artist or musician has ever achieved success except by following the restraining laws of art.

"Freedom of thought" in the full sense is simply nonsense. Every new piece of knowledge

you acquire checks your liberty to think as you please. Once you know that two and two make four, you are not free to think that two and two make five. So that in a certain true and reasonable sense the Church is opposed to " free thought " — or, rather, to license of thought. The Church believes in thinking the truth about things, not in thinking about them just as you please.

Now, I repeat, the Catholic Church, and the Catholic Church alone, insists, and has always insisted, on certain great fundamental principles which lie at the root of all true thinking, and, therefore, of all true progress. And wherever the influence of the Catholic Church wanes, and those truths or principles cease to be attended to, men's thoughts travel on wrong lines, and intellectual or moral disaster follows.

Three Principles. — What are those fundamental truths or principles? They may be summed up under three headings:

First — The supreme value of the soul as a spiritual entity created by God, with an immortal destiny.

Secondly — The absolute supremacy of the Moral Law.

Thirdly — The existence of the First Cause, or God, and man's duty to Him.

Now, the fact that the Church insists on these

three points in reference to the soul — namely, its origin from God, its destiny the possession of God, and the road it must follow, obedience to the law of God — means that the whole outlook of a Catholic on life and the universe is almost immeasurably different from the outlook of a modern "freethinker." In the Catholic system the spiritual soul is the center of creation around which all things revolve, to which all things must be referred. In the infidel system the universe is a vast expanse without a center, with no destiny, a blindly evolving machine hastening no one knows whither; of which machine the soul of man is but a subordinate, almost an accidental, part.

The development of evolutionary ideas in modern times has led prominent scientists, like Sir Arthur Keith, publicly to deny the existence of a spiritual soul; and this, of course, means denial of a future life — it is simply blank materialism. Now, any process of reasoning, of development, of scientific investigation, that ends up in sheer materialism is not real progress — is not, in fact, real science; it is the negation of science. But who is to keep mankind on the right path in these matters concerning the value of the soul? The Catholic Church — and she alone. All her doctrines and sacraments, all her teaching about the Incarnation and the Atonement, inculcate, illustrate, and em-

phasize the great truths about the nature and value of the immortal soul.

Monistic evolution teaches that the soul or principle of life in man is developed from lower forms of animal life. The Church emphatically denies that statement; she teaches that each soul is created directly by the hand of God.

The Moral Law. — In the next place, the Church insists on the importance of the Moral Law and the necessity man is under of obeying its precepts. Nowhere, perhaps, is the need for the Catholic Church as the guide of men's thoughts and men's conduct so evident as here. Progress that advances on lines at variance with the natural law is not true progress. There have been pagan civilizations that have reached a high degree of intellectual culture or polish — such as those of Greece and Rome — and yet were rotten at the core, because they went against the dictates of the natural law, justifying or tolerating such flagrant crimes as suicide, abortion, infanticide, and other unnatural vices. And history proves that the tendency of man's corrupt nature is to blind himself to the precepts of the natural law when they are in opposition to the instincts of his sensual, avaricious, revengeful nature.

Surely, if true progress is to be possible, there must be on earth some authoritative teacher that

will insist ever on the supremacy of God's law; that will keep ever warning men to listen to and obey the voice of conscience in spite of the promptings of passion.

Look around the world and tell me where is such a teacher to be found. What body of men or institution is there that fearlessly and with authority upholds the true doctrine about the sanctity and inviolability of marriage, the unlawfulness of divorce, of infanticide, of unscrupulous exploitation of the poor? You know well that the Catholic Church is that teacher and monitor.

Civilization without moral principles is on the road to moral perdition, and of these moral principles the guardian on earth is the Catholic Church.

Divinity of Jesus Christ. — If we turn to the third sphere of thought — the existence of God and man's relationship to God — we see again the part played by Catholicism in helping men to think along right lines. For the Catholic Church claims, above all things else, to be the mouthpiece of God's Revelation, and she teaches insistently the central doctrine of that Revelation — the divinity of Jesus Christ. And here we touch upon the deepest reason for asserting that the Catholic Church is essential to true progress. For the doctrine of the divinity of Jesus Christ it is that has brought about the marvellous change in human society which we

call Christian civilization. The preaching of the overpowering truth that God had appeared as a man on the stage of history, had actually come into His own creation, and lived an ordinary human life for our sake; that He finally died on the Cross to save mankind, has done more to convince the world of the value of the human soul than all the teachings of all the philosophers that have ever lived.

And because the soul of every man and woman and child was thus precious in God's eyes, therefore the rights of the individual must be respected; and therefore the poor slave groaning under the lash of a Roman taskmaster might be far more pleasing to God that the gorgeously clad patrician at whose nod the slave must toil and sweat.

Christ's Influence. — It was the divine teaching of Jesus Christ, His stern declarations about the inviolability of the marriage bond, that created the Christian family and restored woman to her rightful place as queen of the household. It was the example of the Divine Carpenter of Nazareth that taught men the dignity of human labor. It was His fiery words that brought men to realize the importance of charity to the poor, of respect for children, of pity for the weak. It was He who taught the nobility of social service and the moral grandeur of making, if need arises, the supreme

sacrifice and facing even death itself in order to secure the rights and liberties of others.

The story of the progress of mankind during the past nineteen centuries, the lifting up of the world from the degradation of the pagan Roman Empire, from the licentiousness of the amphitheatre and the gladiatorial shows, from the appalling iniquities of slavery, to the possession of those Christian virtues, that ordered civic and social life, which we see around us to-day — all that is due to the influence of Jesus Christ, the doctrines He taught, the example He gave; all of which affected and moulded mankind so powerfully because they were the influence, the doctrines, the example of a Man who was divine.

Jesus Christ, I repeat, is the center of all true progress, of all true civilization.

But where is it that this doctrine of the divinity of Christ is taught in the world to-day? What institution is it that clearly, definitely and steadfastly proclaims this truth to mankind? The Catholic Church, and the Catholic Church alone. It is her crowning and central doctrine, the very breath of her life. All her liturgical, devotional, religious life centers around that truth.

And it is because the Catholic Church faithfully preserves the true teaching of Christ for the world

that she is an essential element in the progress of mankind.

No Interference with Liberty. — The Catholic Church will not interfere with your liberty. She leaves you perfectly free to follow your own tastes and form your own opinions in art and science, politics and philosophy, literature and the rest. But she warns you when danger is ahead; she points out pitfalls to avoid, for she has had vast experience and knows the human heart well; and, if need be, she sternly reiterates the great fundamental doctrines without which man cannot think aright or live his intellectual and moral life aright, or develop his character aright — the doctrine of the existence of God, the value and immortal destiny of the soul, the freedom of the human will and man's responsibility to God for his conduct.

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